

General Conference

GC(58)/17
Date: 21 July 2014

General Distribution
Original: English

Fifty-eighth regular session

Item 20 of the provisional agenda
(GC(58)/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 17 July 2014 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.

PERMANENT MISSION OF ISRAEL
TO THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY AND
THE PREPCOM - CTBTO



נציגות הקבע של ישראל
לסוכנות הבינלאומית לאנרגיה אטומית ולועדה המכינה
של הארגון ליישום האמנה למניעת ניסויים גרעיניים

17 July 2014

Excellency,

I have the honor to convey Israel's position regarding the request of the Arab States contained in document GC(58)1/Add.1 dated 24 June 2014, to include in the agenda of the 58th (2014) General Conference (GC) an item entitled "Israeli nuclear capabilities."

At the outset, it is important to note that the 57th GC rejected by a vote the draft resolution entitled "Israeli nuclear capabilities". In the 56th and 55th GC's no resolution was submitted under the same agenda item. It is therefore regrettable that the Arab States decided this year, once again, to force the Member States of the IAEA to discuss this issue, which is completely unrelated to the agenda of the GC, clearly outside the scope of the IAEA Statute and mandate, and impairs the Agency's credibility.

The request included in GC(58)1/Add.1 is a cynical request, which is driven by political considerations. Similar to previous years, the 58th GC will face a loaded agenda, involving many critical issues relevant to most Member States. This divisive agenda item will only detract the GC from its main mission. Israel finds it most ironic that some of the Member States, who are among those submitting the above-mentioned request, have had a long unflattering history of violating their international obligations and other norms of the international community, including in the nuclear domain. In this context, it is important to recall that the most significant threats to the nonproliferation regime and the NPT stem from Middle Eastern countries that pursued or continue to pursue nuclear weapons under the cover of their NPT membership. Several such



countries were found to be in flagrant violation of their international obligations and commitments in the nuclear domain, namely Iraq, Libya, Iran and Syria.

Israel values the non-proliferation regime and acknowledges its significance. It strives to establish mutual confidence and to advance regional security and arms control arrangements. Clearly, current regional geo-politics and circumstances are a major impediment to the realization of such goals. Suffice to mention the raining of hundreds of rockets and missiles from the Gaza Strip on civilians all over Israel by the Hamas and fellow terrorist organizations in recent weeks, and the rampage of Jihadists in Syria, Iraq and Lebanon.

Israel has over the years implemented a policy of responsibility and restraint in the nuclear domain. This has also been manifested in many aspects of its practical non-proliferation policy, including in regard to export control legislation and regime.

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. Worsening regional realities only 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. Such a process begins with confidence building measures and mutual recognition, followed by the transformation of tensions, hostilities, simmering conflicts and a state of war to durable and peaceful relations.

The poor track record of non-compliance of several states in the region has a critical impact on the ability to build trust and to embark on a regional security process and arms control arrangements. In view of such alarming practices and violations of international norms and obligations, it is evident that the above-



mentioned Arab request is meant to divert attention from somber Middle East realities.

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 Nuclear Weapons Free Zone in the Middle East. Most recently, in spite of the overall negative regional political environment, a senior Israeli delegation participated in five rounds of multilateral regional consultations that took place in Switzerland since October 2013. These consultations were convened by the Under-Secretary of State of Finland, Ambassador Jaakko Laajava, in a genuine effort to enable direct engagement between the regional states on security matters. Regrettably, some key countries in the region did not take part or did not send their senior representatives, and for some others, it took nearly a year to agree to such consultations. This effort is clearly not a priority from the point of view of these states.

During these consultations Israel elaborated its regional security and arms control policy, including its position regarding the concept of convening a conference to discuss regional security issues and the establishment of a WMD free zone in the Middle East. Israel believes that any regional event should emanate from within the region, based on direct dialogue between all states of the region, in order to address a broad regional security agenda, based on the indispensable principle of consensus between the regional parties.

In light of the region's turbulent history and recent alarming developments, mostly in Iraq, Syria, Libya, Sudan and Yemen and wide-spread terror, Israel harbors no illusions. Progress towards realizing any broad regional security vision cannot be made without a fundamental change in the regional conditions, and not least, without a significant transformation in the attitude of states in the region toward Israel, as well as intra-regional relations as a whole. A region



that includes states that do not recognize others in that region, or repeatedly resort to violence in their relations with their neighboring states, is far from being ripe to make progress on regional arms control and security.

The GC would be best served by rejecting the request for inclusion of this ill-motivated item in its Agenda. By doing so, the GC will send a clear message of professional integrity, and its determination, not to be detracted time and again from the real challenges it is facing in the nuclear realm.

I would be grateful if this letter 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