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Statement by

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Chairman of the Arab Group

**Third Session of the Preparatory Committee
for the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on
the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons**

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Mr. President,

It gives me great pleasure, on behalf of the Members of the League of Arab States, to congratulate Your Excellency on your election as President of the Third Session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2010 NPT Review Conference. We are confident that your diplomatic experience will contribute to the success of this session, and would like to affirm that the Arab Group is determined to fully cooperate with you.

Mr. President,

We attach special importance to this session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2010 NPT Review Conference, particularly to the area of achieving global consensus on the controversial pending issues of the 1995 Review Conference which led to undermining the international efforts aiming at strengthening the disarmament and non-proliferation regimes.

While the conclusion of the Treaty and its indefinite extension in 1995 have contributed to curbing the proliferation of nuclear weapons for the past four decades and have helped to strengthen international cooperation with IAEA while consolidating the principle of peaceful uses and applications of nuclear energy, the Treaty has not yet become universal due to the double standard approach of some states in dealing with regional nuclear issues, which has not only resulted in the disruption of efforts aimed at establishing more zones that are free from nuclear weapons, but has also diminished the credibility of the Treaty and its ability to safeguard the security of its Middle Eastern members. It has further resulted in undermining international arrangements and efforts

aimed at achieving the three main objectives of the Treaty: nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Therefore, we in the Arab Group welcome the positive spirit demonstrated recently by the American Administration regarding the initiative of a world free from nuclear weapons and its willingness to engage in serious negotiations with the Soviet Union to reduce strategic arms, and the positive approach to ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty CTBT and initiate negotiations on a viable treaty for cutting off the fissile material FMCT. In this context, we affirm that this initiative would not be sufficient if it is not associated with the demonstration of political orientations that are consistent with the important recommendations, resolutions and decisions agreed upon at the 1995 and 2000 NPT Review Conferences by all parties, which will prove that there is still hope to narrow the widening gap between nuclear and non-nuclear states with regard to their obligations and mutual responsibilities and to enhance the effectiveness of the Treaty by renewing our balanced commitment towards its three axes: disarmament, non-proliferation and international cooperation in the area of peaceful uses of nuclear energy. This will require, in our opinion, a flexible approach by all parties and transparent negotiations within the framework of a commitment to achieve consensus, in order to avoid undermining the next review conference and enable it to resume its primary role in addressing the pressing issues related to the implementation of the Treaty in all its aspects.

Mr. President,

While we reiterate that the only guarantee for nuclear weapons not to be used, or the threat of their use, is their total elimination, which will contribute to reducing and closing the widening gap between nuclear and non-nuclear states with regard to their obligations and responsibilities on the one hand, and between the goals of achieving complete nuclear disarmament on the other, we believe that our deliberations during this session should focus on the following five main areas:

- I Rcafirming the importance of achieving a coherent and balanced progress in the three key areas of action: non-proliferation, disarmament and useful uses of nuclear weapons, which are considered the fundamental pillars of the Treaty. This will require the next review conference to demand all states to implement the 13 practical steps for nuclear disarmament, which were adopted by the 2000 Review Conference, in a non-selective or biased manner and within a comprehensive, viable and irreversible action plan aiming to achieving total nuclear disarmament and strengthening the vertical and horizontal non-proliferation system of nuclear weapons. In this regard, we hope that the next review conference will renew its call to the five nuclear powers to shoulder their responsibilities under the NPT and engage in serious and effective negotiations on an effective program to gradually dismantle their existing nuclear stockpiles, including the tactical weapons and productive capacities for developing warheads and their delivery systems, within a set time frame and in accordance with Article 6 of the Treaty and paragraphs 3 and 4 of the 1995 Review Conference concerning the principles

and objectives of disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, and in order to dispel the fears of developing countries.

- II Supporting efforts aimed at developing an international legally binding instrument to provide security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon states against all possible uses or the threat of the use of nuclear weapons until the total elimination of nuclear weapons is accomplished.
- III Reaffirming the need for the 2010 Review Conference to adopt a comprehensive action plan for achieving the universality of the Treaty as the cornerstone of the global non-proliferation regime. The action plan should depend on the implementation of a series of practical and binding steps aiming at achieving the progressive and systematic universalization of the Treaty, in accordance with Article 1 of decision II adopted by the 1995 Review Conference regarding the principles and objectives. In this context, we propose that more effective measures be taken by the next review conference with a view to demanding for all states outside the Treaty to accede to it without delay, and for preventing any form of cooperation in the nuclear field with such states. Member States to the Treaty should also be requested to submit periodical reports to the Preparatory Committee and Review Conferences indicating the practical measures taken by these states under their obligations relating to the Treaty and in accordance with the resolutions and decisions of the relevant review conferences.
- IV Reaffirming the inalienable right of non-nuclear states to develop scientific research on nuclear energy and its production for peaceful uses, as well as their right to pursue nuclear technology for peaceful purposes without discrimination or obstacles as long as the use of this technology is done under the full supervision of IAEA.
- V Emphasizing the importance of reinvigorating the Conference on Disarmament, which is the only multilateral international body concerned with addressing disarmament issues. In this regard, we welcome the positive consideration of the recent proposal made by Algeria on 26 March, 2009, the President of the Conference on Disarmament, regarding the work program of the conference and urge the members of the conference to support this important initiative, which may be a step forward in commencing balanced international deliberations and negotiations on the fundamental disarmament issues, under the umbrella of the Conference on Disarmament.

Mr. President,

Let me now move to one of the most important and pressing issues for the Arab States: the implementation of the resolution on the Middle East which was adopted by the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference and reaffirmed by the 2000 Review Conference. You may recall the package which led to the indefinite extension of the

Treaty in 1995, subject to the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. Despite the fourteen years that have passed since the adoption of this resolution and other similar resolutions approved by the General Assembly, the Security Council and IAEA, and the numerous initiatives launched by the Arab States to support this goal in international fora, nothing from these has been achieved. Therefore, we call upon this meeting to discuss all practicable measures required to move this issue forward with a view to reaching an agreement on an implementation mechanism, in order to submit recommendations to the next review conference in this regard and on the establishment of a subsidiary body to focus on ways to effectively implement the resolution on the Middle East as an integral part of the NPT. In this context, we caution that, if the 1995 resolution on the Middle East continues to be compromised, then all the outcomes and resolutions of the 1995 Review and Extension Conference would be compromised, including the resolution of the indefinite extension of the Treaty. Therefore, we urge state parties, particularly the three depositary states, to make every effort to adopt practical steps that will ensure the full implementation of this resolution. The Arab Group has submitted two working papers to the present Preparatory Committee: one is on the implementation of the resolution on the Middle East which includes proposals for developing practical recommendations to be discussed and submitted to the next review conference. The other paper is on the future of the NPT, particularly in terms of its effectiveness and future challenges. We hope the conference will take stock of such proposals, keeping in mind the security concerns of the states of the region expressed in the Declaration of the Summit Meeting of the Council of the League of Arab States, which was held at Doha, in March 2009 and called upon the international community to establish a zone free of nuclear weapons in the Middle East by exerting pressure on Israel to accede to the NPT and to place all of its nuclear facilities and programs under the supervision of the IAEA, as an essential step towards consolidating international peace and security.

Mr. President,

To sum up, we in the Arab Group, in fulfilling our commitment towards achieving the objectives of the Treaty and realizing the initiatives which we announced so many times, particularly with regard to the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, we urge all states, without exception, to demonstrate flexibility and seriousness in seizing the opportunity provided by the present session of the preparatory committee to take the necessary measures and practical steps, within the framework of their commitment to the Treaty and to the resolutions of the Review conferences, to reach consensus on the recommendations to be submitted to the 2010 Review conference, with a view to rebuilding confidence in the non-proliferation system established by the Treaty and for realizing the aspirations of all people of living in peace, security and prosperity.

Thank you Mr. President