

**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR AMR ABOULATTA, PR OF EGYPT,  
ON BEHALF OF THE NEW AGENDA COALITION AT THE FIRST  
COMMITTEE GENERAL DEBATE OF THE 71<sup>ST</sup> UNGA SESSION**

Thank you Mr. Chair,

I have the honour to take the floor on behalf of the members of the New Agenda Coalition (NAC) namely Brazil, Ireland, Mexico, New Zealand, South Africa, and my own country, Egypt. At the outset, the NAC would like to congratulate you on your assumption of the Chairmanship of this year's First Committee and would also like to assure you of the NAC's full cooperation and support with the view to the successful conclusion of this year's deliberations.

As we have regularly done, the NAC will present a draft resolution to this Committee which will be introduced during the thematic debate on nuclear disarmament.

Mr. Chair,

In founding the NAC in 1998, the Foreign Ministers of our respective countries were motivated by the continued threat to humanity represented by the continued existence of nuclear weapons and the possibility of use or threat of use of these weapons. This threat continues to guide NAC efforts to accelerate nuclear disarmament for the achievement and maintenance of a world free of nuclear weapons.

It is the view of the NAC that accelerating and achieving the fulfilment of nuclear disarmament obligations is the only appropriate response to the catastrophic humanitarian consequences and risks associated with the very existence of nuclear weapons, awareness of which has been growing since 2010. These risks and consequences, which respect no national borders and have a strongly gendered impact, will remain as long as nuclear weapons exist. The NAC firmly believes that our deep concern at the catastrophic humanitarian consequences and risks of a nuclear weapon detonation should underpin our endeavors towards nuclear disarmament and the urgency of achieving and maintaining a nuclear-weapon-free world.

**Mr. Chair,**

**The NAC deeply regrets that, while the threat posed to the international community by nuclear weapons has not abated, progress in nuclear disarmament remains elusive. Notwithstanding the exhortations of the very first resolution of the UN General Assembly, the specific legal obligations contained in article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear weapons (NPT), and the countless additional obligations and commitments made by the nuclear weapon States through the NPT review process, implementation has fallen far short of expectations.**

**We remain deeply concerned by the unacceptably slow pace of nuclear disarmament, both at the regional and global levels, despite successive undertakings from the nuclear-weapon-States since 1995. While significant reductions have been made since the peak of the Cold War years, bilateral reductions are no substitute for multilateral nuclear disarmament measures implemented in accordance with the principles of irreversibility, verifiability and transparency. Our concern at the slow pace of disarmament is compounded by ongoing modernization programmes, which are in contradiction with the unequivocal undertaking given by the nuclear-weapon States to eliminate their nuclear arsenals.**

**The NAC is also deeply concerned that the Conference on Disarmament has not been able to fulfil its mandate nor to agree upon and implement a programme of work for twenty years. We believe that the Conference should commence, without delay, substantive work that advances the agenda of nuclear disarmament, particularly through multilateral negotiations.**

**Further, we strongly support efforts to strengthen women's empowerment and their leadership and participation in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation debates.**

**The NAC wishes to reiterate its disappointment and deep concern that the 1995 resolution on the establishment of the Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction has yet to be implemented. We therefore call upon all States Parties to the NPT to work towards its full implementation, which is inextricably linked to the indefinite extension of the**

**Treaty. The 1995 resolution remains valid until its ultimate goals and objectives are achieved.**

**Mr. Chair,**

**The NPT remains the cornerstone of the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. The failure to agree on outcome document at the 2015 NPT Review Conference was a missed opportunity to advance implementation of existing nuclear disarmament commitments towards the fulfilment of Article VI.**

**The next review cycle of the Treaty which begins in May 2017 presents an opportunity for the States Parties to undertake comprehensive review and assessment of the current status of the Treaty, the implementation of previous obligations and commitments within its framework, and the challenges facing its full implementation.**

**It is now time that the international community translate words into concrete action backed by clear and agreed upon benchmarks and timelines. The NAC believes that the nuclear-weapon States should not only implement their previous commitments and obligations, but should strive to build further on them as this would contribute to taking forward the aims and purpose of the Treaty.**

**Given that more than forty-five years have passed since the entry into force of the NPT, the status quo on nuclear disarmament is no longer acceptable or sustainable. The NAC believes that it is now time for States to deliver upon their commitments in line with their obligations under article VI together with the subsequent unequivocal undertaking made by the nuclear weapon States to eliminate their nuclear arsenals. As such, there is an urgent need for the commencement of negotiations in good faith on nuclear disarmament.**

**Mr. Chair,**

**Unless options for the negotiations of effective measures are pursued, the present and unacceptably slow pace of multilateral nuclear disarmament will continue. In light of this, the NAC urges all States parties to seize the opportunity of this First Committee to make a difference on nuclear disarmament.**