

***Statement of the Arab Republic of Egypt
First Committee of UNGA / 71st Session
(Thematic discussion on Disarmament Machinery)***

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, Egypt associates itself with the statement delivered by Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, as well as Tunisia on behalf of the Arab Group.

We reiterate our full support for the existing United Nations disarmament machinery, as established by the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (SSOD-I).

We reaffirm Egypt's longstanding commitment to nuclear disarmament by working within its regional and broader groupings such as the League of Arab States, the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), the African Group, the New Agenda Coalition (NAC), and other partners and relevant parties. We also recognize the important role played by non-governmental organizations and civil society in the field of nuclear disarmament.

Mr. Chair,

While the Conference on Disarmament (CD) remains the sole multilateral negotiating body on disarmament, the absence of political will to reach a balanced outcome that reflects the interests of all countries remains the main obstacle preventing the CD from adopting a balanced, and comprehensive program of work. The solution lies in addressing all the issues on the agenda of the conference through an integrated approach that includes most importantly negotiations on nuclear disarmament, and negative security assurances, as well as on a treaty to ban fissile material including existing

stockpiles for military purposes, and prevention of an arms race in outer space (PAROS).

Egypt has contributed in the efforts aimed at revitalizing the work of the Conference on Disarmament. All international efforts should be mobilized in the direction of reinforcing the strength of the CD to deal effectively with disarmament issues within its substantive and procedural frameworks.

We welcome any collective action of Member States aimed at revitalizing the work of the Conference, as long as such efforts do not affect its rules of procedure nor its priorities. Nuclear disarmament remains the top priority set not only through SSOD-I, but also according to the very first UN General Assembly resolution in 1946. The Conference on Disarmament is called upon to shoulder its responsibility in this regard by launching negotiations on a universal comprehensive Convention that legally bans and totally eliminates nuclear weapons.

Mr. Chair,

As an integral part of the established Disarmament machinery, Egypt also believes that there is a need for similar efforts to revitalize the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC) especially that it has the potential for substantively contributing to the Disarmament Machinery at large. Through the UNDC, some key guidelines and norm-setting frameworks have evolved, including the 1999 guidelines on the establishment of nuclear weapon-free zones, adopted by consensus, aiming at a world free of nuclear weapons, as well as the 16 Principles of Verification in 1988.

Furthermore, as a voluntarily-funded autonomous institute within the United Nations, the UN Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) has

enjoyed sustained support from Egypt, aimed at realizing UNIDIR research and training potential in furthering nuclear disarmament. We believe that international community has to preserve the UNIDIR as an impartial actor and independent entity in order to continue generating ideas and promoting international actions on disarmament and international security (specifically nuclear disarmament).

Mr. Chairman,

To conclude, the importance of revitalizing the United Nations disarmament machinery requires that our efforts are to be: collective and not individual / complementary and not contradictory / consensual and not divisive. We are hopeful that the First Committee, under your leadership, will be able to inject much needed momentum into such efforts.

Thank You