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The Permanent Mission of Egypt  
to the United Nations  
New York

بعثة مصر الدائمة  
لدى الأمم المتحدة  
نيويورك

**Statement by the Delegation of the Arab Republic of Egypt  
at the  
Substantive Session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission  
Please check against delivery, New York, April 4, 2017**

Thank you Madame Chair,

At the outset, let me express our sincere condolences to the Russian delegation on the sad occasion of the terrorist attack in St. Petersburg this morning.

I would like to congratulate you for your election to preside this year's substantive session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission, and to express our appreciation for your efforts so far. You have our full support and backing. Likewise, I would like to extend our congratulations to other Members of the Bureau for their election, and to commend Venezuela and Bulgaria for chairing the two UNDC Working Groups respectively.

I would like to associate my delegation with joint the statements delivered by the Non-Aligned Movement, as well as the Arab & African Groups.

This year is particularly important for the UNDC, as it comes after the unprecedented momentum in light of the first session of the UN negotiating conference on legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons leading towards their total elimination, which took place last week. This objective is chiefly dependent upon the implementation by the Nuclear Weapon States in accordance with their legal obligations under Article VI of the NPT as well as the achievement of universal adherence to the Treaty.

Hence, seeking a substantive outcome this year is important, if we are to preserve the relevance of the UNDC towards the multilateral machinery on disarmament, given the successive failures of the past cycles of the commission to adopt any recommendations since 1999. We call upon nuclear-weapon States and major arms exporters to display the necessary political will, in order to reach a substantive outcome on the two important issues

before the UNDC agenda, in order to enable the potential of the UNDC in furthering the cause of disarmament.

Madame Chair,

Let me begin with the UNDC issue on “Recommendations for Achieving the Objective of Nuclear Disarmament and Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons”. The starting point in this regard should be the implementation of the General Assembly resolution (res. 69/58) on the Follow-up to the High Level Meeting of the General Assembly on Nuclear Disarmament held on September 26, 2013. The resolution continues to chart a road map towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons with another High Level Meeting next year here in New York. The UNDC should be ready to contribute its inputs in deliberating on the implementation of this road map, especially with regard to the elements of a comprehensive convention on nuclear weapons to prohibit their possession, development, production, acquisition, testing, stockpiling, transfer, use or threat of use and to provide for their destruction globally, verifiably and without exception.

The universalization of the NPT is an indispensable step to achieve general and comprehensive nuclear disarmament. The speedy establishment of nuclear weapon free zones adds motivation to efforts aimed at achieving the wider objective of a world free of nuclear weapons. The international community has recognized the urgency of the establishment of a Zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. Yet, despite these repeated calls, and the overwhelming global support for the establishment of the Zone, the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East, which is an integral and essential part of the package of decisions that enabled the indefinite extension of the NPT in 1995, remains unfulfilled up till now. The 1995 Resolution remains valid until its objectives are achieved, and hence should be implemented without any further delay. The UNDC provides a timely opportunity to reiterate the commitment of the international community to bring the process back on track. It provides an adequate forum to reflect on

how to break the current stalemate, and to restore the credibility and sustainability of the NPT as a cornerstone treaty, as well as its review cycles, which will resume next month in Vienna.

Madame Chair,

Deliberations of the UNDC on “Practical Confidence-Building Measures in the Field of Conventional Weapons” assume a growing importance. By contributing to the debate on confidence building measures, the UNDC will be helping to address areas of concern relating to conventional weapons, including the outstanding issue of illegal trafficking in small arms and light weapons. We need to build upon the constructive deliberations we had in 2015 & 2016 within Working Group II.

We have consistently called for the following elements as integral components of any possible confidence building measures:

1. Subjecting over production and ever-increasing stockpiles of conventional weapons in the hands of major arms exporters and producers to international inspection.
2. Mutual international accountability; as the only guarantee against potential abuse of the existing imbalance between major arms producers and the rest of the world.
3. Addressing protracted threats to international peace and security. In this regard, there is no more profound threat to peace and stability, to international law, international humanitarian law, human rights law and to the core principles of the UN Charter itself than the crimes of aggression and foreign occupation which employ conventional arms arsenals to threaten and dominate peoples and deny them their most basic human rights.

By developing such ‘confidence building measures’, the UNDC will be refining the traditional meaning of the term, thus contributing conceptually to enhancing international peace, security and stability. Furthermore, we welcome the consensual outcome document of

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**Sixth Biennial Meeting of States (BMS-6) to consider the implementation the UN Programme of Action to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in all its aspects. Also we seek a successful Review Conference next year in this regard, under the current French presidency.**

**Madame Chair,**

**Egypt fully supports the UNDC, as an integral component of the Disarmament Machinery created by SSOD-I back in 1978, and we stand ready to contribute constructively to the deliberations to ensure a positive outcome of the two Working Groups concurrently. An outcome that reflects a considerable balance between the interests of all states. We are confident in your ability to steer the discussion towards a successful outcome of this cycle.**

**I do thank you**