



**Introductory Remarks  
General Exchange of Views  
The Substantive Session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission  
New York, April 2, 2018**

*Check against delivery*

**Madam Chairperson,**

I would like to congratulate you on your election to preside over this year's substantive session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC), as well as express appreciation to your predecessor, the Permanent Representative of Argentina, for her efforts as President of the 2017 Session. Likewise, I would like to extend our congratulations to the other Members of the Bureau on their election and to Belgium and Jamaica for chairing the two Working Groups. Let me assure you of my delegation's full support and cooperation.

I would also like to fully associate Egypt's position with the positions reflected in the statements of the Arab Group, the African Group, and the Non-Aligned Movement.

**Madam Chairperson,**

This session of the UNDC bears particular importance for several reasons:

First, we meet today while the world seems to be on the verge of a new chapter of the arms race among the Nuclear-Weapon States (NWS). This is an alarming fact that reflects an undermining of the objectives upon which the United Nations was founded, the very first resolution adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1946, and countless agreed obligations and commitments.



This calls for an immediate revival of reliable multilateral disarmament efforts and a revitalization of all components of the disarmament machinery, as well as a serious assessment of the existing approach to disarmament which has thus far failed to fulfill our aspirations.

Second, this cycle of the UNDC remarkably coincides with the preparations for the forthcoming SSOD-IV, as well as the 2020 NPT Review Conference, which we hope would reach a successful outcome in order to restore the deteriorating credibility and sustainability of the NPT and the regime it established, including through launching the long stalled negotiations on the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. A successful outcome by this cycle of the UNDC, especially on nuclear disarmament, may help creating the right conditions and confidence needed for a successful NPT Review Conference and SSOD.

Third, the successful conclusion of substantive recommendations by the UNDC in 2017 for the first time since 1999 makes it important to sustain this success and build on it. There is no doubt that there is an urgent need for bringing disarmament and arms-control back to the forefront of the UN efforts and making up for the lost decades in this area. And the UNDC, with its universal membership, can definitely support and facilitate these efforts. It is important to note that the Conference on Disarmament (CD) has recently established subsidiary bodies to engage in deliberations that could hopefully lead to the adoption of a balanced and comprehensive program of work to enable the CD to resume its original function as the sole negotiating forum on disarmament.

Fourth, the two items on the agenda for this cycle are of utmost importance to international peace and security. On both agenda items, while we recognize the need for a gradual approach when it comes to the implementation of certain disarmament commitments, we believe that actual negotiations on such commitments should not follow a similar slow and gradual approach, especially when the principles and final objectives have already been previously agreed and codified.

**Madam Chairperson,**

We expect that at this critical juncture, the recommendations of this cycle of UNDC would include a clear reiteration of the agreed principles and objectives in both areas. These recommendations should be based on a clear commitment to the principles of multilateralism, nondiscrimination, and full respect for the rule of law at the international level, as well as honoring the existing commitments and building on them, ensuring universality, verifiability, and irreversibility.

In the area of nuclear disarmament, we believe that there is an urgent need for a clear roadmap towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons within a specific timeframe. There is also a need for launching negotiations on the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones, especially in the Middle East.

A consensus outcome on nuclear disarmament is most important in this cycle if we are to preserve the relevance of the UNDC to the disarmament machinery, especially given the successive failures of the past cycles of the Commission to adopt an outcome on nuclear disarmament. We call upon the Nuclear-weapon States to



display the necessary political will in order to reach a substantive outcome to enable the potential and mandate of the UNDC.

In the area of the prevention of an arms race in outer space, we strongly support all efforts that aim at safeguarding the continued peaceful use of outer space and preventing outer space from becoming a zone of conflict. In this context, Egypt strongly welcomes the establishment of a Governmental Group of Experts to consider and make recommendations on substantial elements of an international legally-binding instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, including the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space. Parallel efforts on politically binding and voluntary transparency and confidence building measures may temporarily represent a positive contribution, but they do not represent a reliable substitute in the long-term for legally binding instruments.

**Finally Madam Chairperson,**

If there is a political will, the existing disarmament machinery is still capable of producing the required results and fulfilling the tasks bestowed upon it by the Member States themselves. And Egypt stands ready to contribute constructively to the deliberations to ensure a balanced outcome between the results of the two Working Groups. We are confident in your ability to steer the discussions towards such a successful outcome of this cycle.

Thank you.