

United Nations
Disarmament Commission

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Statement by
Mr. Nimrod Kalmar
First Secretary for Political Affairs

United Nations, New York

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Thank you, Mr. Chairperson

As this is the first time my delegation is taking the floor, I would like to congratulate you on assuming the Chairmanship, and assure you of my delegations' support in the implementation of your duties. I would also like to congratulate the working group chairs from Georgia and El-Salvador and wish them success, upon facilitating the work at the WG's.

Chair,

The importance of the UNDC, as outlined in the First Special Session on Disarmament in 1978, stems from its function within the international disarmament machinery, to, *inter alia*, consider elements of a comprehensive program for disarmament. To fulfill this mandate effectively, it is clear that the UNDC must make recommendations while striking the essential balance between what we strive to achieve and what is plausible, given the prevailing global and regional circumstances.

Mr. Chairperson,

In this respect, Israel believes the international community should be focusing primarily on compliance, a pillar of arms control and disarmament governance. Looking to develop new mechanisms, without full implementation and compliance with the existing ones, falls short of addressing the multitude of current and future global security challenges.

Israel values the contribution of international arms control and disarmament mechanisms to global non-proliferation. In order to maintain strategic stability, it is crucial to address the systematic lack of adherence to international disarmament norms and obligations.

The Middle East, in particular, is still struggling with a long-lasting culture of non-compliance. It is worth recalling that to this day, four out of the five cases of serious violations of the NPT, since the Treaty entered into force, took place in the Middle East.

Mr. Chairperson,

The nuclear activities of Iran and Syria remain 'an open file' to be decided by the IAEA. These NPT Member States have knowingly and deliberately violated the treaty .

Iran's conduct over the past years, in which under the guise of ongoing negotiations, it continued to make rapid progress in its nuclear capabilities, including enriching uranium to a near weapons grade, indicates that Iran has never given up on its pursuit of military nuclear prospects. Iran presents a clear and immediate threat to the global nonproliferation regime and to global security.

On March 4th IAEA Director General Grossi stated that there has been no progress in resolving the outstanding safeguards issues nor has Iran been able to provide "technically credible explanations" for its nuclear activity. Let us remember: this is a regime which has repeatedly called for the complete annihilation of Israel. Those who doubt their resolve need look no further than Iran's financing and training of terrorist groups in the middle east, including Hamas, the perpetrators of the genocidal October 7th massacre.

With regard to the use of chemical weapons in Syria, the grave challenge lies in that despite great efforts of the OPCW and the international community, Syria is still attempting to advance development and production of chemical weapons, as we speak. This threat is further amplified by the imminent risk of proliferation of WMDs to non-state actors.

It is crucial to address the continuous disdain, by some states in the region, to their obligations. Non-compliance, cannot be tolerated and must be tackled, and states must be held accountable for their violations.

Mr. Chairperson,

In the upcoming discussions, we are likely to hear some countries expressing their opinion with regard to establishing a WMD Free Zone in the Middle East. This initiative is first and foremost a regional matter and NOT a global one. Given that the Disarmament Commission is a GLOBAL framework, the UNDC is hardly the place to address this issue.

Furthermore, experience from other regions in the world, demonstrates that any framework of regional security can only be the outcome of mutual political desire of all parties to engage with each other. Such regional architecture must take into consideration the security concerns of every state and reflect arrangements freely arrived at by all states in the region, as stipulated in the 1999 UNDC report A/54/42 – The Disarmament Commission Report on Guidelines and Principles for the Establishment of Nuclear-weapon-free zones.

Without adherence to these well-established principles, there will be no useful basis for discourse with regard to the establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and other Weapons of Mass Destruction.

Ill-motivated initiatives, such as the UN Conference on a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and other Weapons of Mass Destruction, run contrary to the well-established guidelines and principles that have served as a basis for any other Nuclear Weapons Free Zone, and are unhelpful. Israel will not take part in an artificial process that bypasses established practice.

Mr. Chairperson,

Emerging technologies are crucial for human development, offer tremendous opportunities, and they are both a product of and a catalyst for social and economic innovation. They are force multipliers that can assist humanity across a wide range of fields, including food security and climate change.

These technologies are developing at a rapid pace, offering many opportunities while also raising challenges and concerns. Their innovative nature, technological complexity, and wide range of applications require that economic, social, and national security concerns be taken into consideration as they spread. As technology is neutral, states should strive to agree on common understandings by which emerging technology can be used responsibly.

Mr. Chairperson,

We believe that a comprehensive approach in our discussions in the upcoming weeks, taking into account the various compliance challenges we face today, is the best avenue for the UNDC to fully realize its mandate and advance towards achieving global security and prosperity.

Israel hopes for successful deliberation in this year's UNDC plenary.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.