

**Statement by Ambassador/ Ahmed El Fadly before the 5th Conference of
States Parties to "Pelindaba Treaty"**

Mr/Mrs chairman,
Ambassadors and honourable participants present here today,

Allow me at the outset to express my country's appreciation for the government of South Africa for hosting this 5th session of the Conference of States Parties to "Pelindaba Treaty". I would like also to reiterate Egypt's unrelenting support to the Presidency of the Conference and to its constructive efforts aiming at sharing ideas and views on the establishment of a Nuclear Weapons Free Zone in the African continent.

Ladies & Gentlemen,

Egypt has long sought to strengthen the international multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation regime ever since their inception. This pursuit emanates from a longstanding belief in the importance of achieving both international, as well as regional peace and security through disarmament and effective multilateral engagement and co-operation. Accordingly, Egypt has worked, through pertinent international institutions, to uphold international laws and principles with the view of maintaining both international and regional peace and security. Owing to Egypt's belief that the aforementioned goal can only be achieved through the complete and general disarmament of Nuclear, Chemical and Biological weapons.

As a pioneer promotor of the establishment of nuclear weapons free zones around the globe, and in an attempt to accelerate the disarmament of all Weapons of Mass Destruction, Egypt adopted the goal of the establishment a Nuclear Weapons Free Zone in the Middle East in 1974, when it put forth a resolution to the United Nations General Assembly on the issue. This call was subsequently adopted unanimously in the United Nations General Assembly since 1980, thereby constituting a common international denominator in this regard, and then was endorsed as an international obligation pursuing the 1995 NPT Review Conference as a part of a package deal through which the NPT was indefinitely extended.

In the same line, Egypt has ardently shown its steadfast support to the efforts aiming at the establishment of a Nuclear-Weapons free zone in the African continent, starting from the adoption of the 1964 Declaration on the

Denuclearization of Africa, passing by the African states endeavors implementing the 1964 Declaration through a resolution of the United Nations General Assembly in 1991, and down to the conclusion of The African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty in 1996. Needless to say that the Egyptian active role in the preparatory process of this treaty was embodied in the signing of this treaty in Cairo, as a clear testimony of its unwavering commitment to disarmament and non-proliferation objectives.

Nevertheless, Egypt has opted so far to delay its ratification to the Pelindaba Treaty, due to the overlapping of its commitments being a part of the African Continent and the Middle East region at the same time. It is regrettable, that twenty-six years after the adoption of the Middle East resolution, we don't see any practical steps from the international community towards the implementation of this resolution or any progress towards the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. Furthermore, we even witness attempts to thwart and obstruct any serious or effective initiatives or ideas to move towards this goal, despite their objectivity, reliance on dialogue and on the principle of consensus in any decision making. This continued state of impassability and stagnation has hampered the balance of legal commitments between the States of the Middle East, pushing in turn States with multi-geographical affiliations, like Egypt, to refrain from committing to any further obligation until the fulfilment of the aforementioned inherent goal.

Excellencies,

2020 marked the 50th anniversary of the entry into force of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the 25th anniversary of its indefinite extension. We re-affirm today the central role of nuclear-weapon-free zones in the consolidation of the NPT, as well as in their contributions to addressing nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation across all regions of the world. In that regard, I would like to recall the statement made by Mr. Messaoud BAALIOUAMER, the Executive Secretary of the African Commission on Nuclear Energy, on the occasion of the 25th Anniversary of the Opening for Signature of the Pelindaba Treaty held in April 2021, when he said, I quote: "The Signatories to the Pelindaba Treaty, recognize that the establishment of other NWFZs, especially in the Middle East, would enhance the security of States Parties to the African NWFZ. Today we recall the importance of the UN Security Council Resolution 984 (1995) on the Middle East, which was an integral and essential part of the package of decisions and the basis upon which consensus was reached on the indefinite extension of the NPT".

While Africa has clearly demonstrated its serious commitment towards nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, this should be reciprocated by strengthened support from the International community as well as related international organizations, including the IAEA, to its ability to exploiting its inalienable rights of peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

In conclusion, Egypt as one of the African States that has opted for an ambitious program by embarking on building nuclear power stations for peaceful power generation in Dabaa, and with more than 60 years of experience in the field of peaceful uses of nuclear energy, stands ready to support and work in close partnership with our brothers and sisters in Africa, both at the bilateral and regional levels, and in the different aspects pertaining to peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Thank you for your attention.
