
Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

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Report by the Facilitator to the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

Preparations for the Conference

1. In his report (NPT/CONF.2015/PC.II/11) to the first session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons held in April - May 2012, the facilitator explained his approach to implementing his mandate.
2. The facilitator has continued consulting with the States of the Middle East in support of the implementation of the 1995 Resolution as well as undertaking preparations for the convening of the Conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction.
3. In May 2012, the facilitator's office presented the States of the region non-papers on the different substantive and organizational aspects of the Conference in order to assist in identifying arrangements to be freely arrived at by them. Following input received, in October 2012 the facilitator circulated updated non-papers as his proposals for the Conference arrangements, including its agenda, modalities and rules of procedure. In his proposals, the facilitator sought to accommodate the different points of departure of the States of the region as regards the Conference and the establishment of a zone.
4. The International Atomic Energy Agency, the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention Implementation Support Unit and the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Organisation provided the requested background documentation for the Conference regarding modalities for a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems, taking into account work previously undertaken and experience gained. The background documentation was shared with the States of the region by the facilitator in December 2012.
5. Since the first session of the Preparatory Committee in 2012, a variety of academic institutions, civil society actors and think-tanks organized a number of events aimed at fostering regional dialogue on the establishment of a zone and on the Conference. These events gained good participation from the Middle East region, and they were also attended by the facilitator or members of his team. The events sought to, inter alia, identify possible confidence-building measures in support of the establishment of a zone as well as provide fora for the States of the region to engage with each other informally in preparation for the Conference.

Convening of the Conference

6. Not all States of the region having taken a position regarding their participation or arrangements for the Conference, it was not possible to convene a Conference in 2012 as planned with the participation of all States of the region.

7. The conveners all emphasized that they remained committed to the goal of achieving a Middle East zone free of weapons of mass destruction and reaffirmed their commitment to convening the Conference with the participation of all States of the region as soon as possible.

8. Following the statements by the conveners, the Government of Finland announced that it remained prepared to host the Conference once convened. The facilitator stated he would continue Conference preparations together with the States of the region and the conveners and, to that end, proposed holding multilateral consultations as soon as possible.

9. Disappointment at the postponement of the Conference was widely expressed. Nevertheless, all States of the region expressed their willingness to continue the preparations for the Conference. Many States of the region requested the conveners to announce a new date for the Conference.

Next steps

10. The premises for convening the Conference remain in place and preparations to that end continue accordingly.

11. As soon as the arrangements for the Conference have been freely arrived at by the States of the region, the Conference can then be convened without delay. To that end, further convergence of views by the States of the region is needed.

12. With a view to ensuring the earliest possible convening of the Conference, the facilitator and the conveners will continue to consult with the States of the region in order that all relevant parties can be brought together for a constructive dialogue that advances the objective of the Middle East zone.

13. All concerned parties are encouraged to use the potential of the process to contribute to the Middle East region's security and stability, and to enable partners to initiate a gradual change in the region, from confrontation to cooperation, with important implications to wider interests of regional and international peace.