Statement by
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(Check Against Delivery)
Mr. Chairperson,

Israel's policy in the nuclear domain has always been one of responsibility and restraint and consonant with the underlying goals and principles of non-proliferation, including those expressed in the NPT. Unfortunately, as has been clearly demonstrated in the Middle East in recent years, the NPT does not provide a guarantee that these non-proliferation principles will be implemented and adhered to, or address the unique security challenges of our region.

The Treaty has certainly not prevented substantial violations of its obligations by several Middle East member states and has not sufficiently remedied these violations once they have been discovered. Indeed, the 2010 NPT Review Conference Action Plan's failure to address Iran's nuclear file is a clear case in point.

It should be emphasized that NPT membership is not a goal in itself and that the critical importance is for the treaty to be respected by those countries that have joined it. Calls for universal adherence to the NPT must be judged against the Middle East's region-specific characteristics and particularly the fact that the vast majority of members of the Arab Group continue to refuse to recognize Israel as a sovereign state. For example, when Syria joined the NPT it stated specifically that this accession does not imply recognition of Israel and therefore no obligation towards it.

In this context, it is clear that Israel must give due consideration to the fact that four out of five cases of violation of the NPT took place in the Middle East, namely Iraq, Libya, Iran and Syria. The fifth case of the Treaty's gross violation, namely the DPRK, was
heavily involved in nuclear and ballistic missile proliferation to the Middle East with the above countries.

Mr. Chairperson,

Israel’s approach and policy in the field of regional security and arms control has always been pragmatic and realistic. It is rooted in its belief that all security concerns of regional members should be taken into account and be realistically addressed within the regional context.

Israel's long-term vision and goals for the regional security and arms control in the Middle East underlines lasting peaceful relations, reconciliation, good neighborliness, open borders and trust among the regional parties, as key milestones en-route to the eventual establishment of a mutually verifiable zone free of all weapons of mass destruction and means of delivery.

International experience has shown that such a zone can only emanate from within a region, through direct negotiations and consensus building. The Middle East region, with all its complexities, can certainly be of no exception. The disturbing realities in the Middle East mandate a practical step-by-step approach, bearing in mind the goal of achieving peaceful relations and reconciliation among all the States in the region. This process is inherently an incremental one. It can only begin with modest arrangements for confidence and security building measures in order to build necessary trust for more ambitious cooperative security undertakings.

Mr. Chairperson,

Regrettably, at present, no regional security dialogue exists in the Middle East, nor is there a forum to develop confidence-building measures and defuse tensions. The Middle East countries have no
regional forum in which all can directly communicate with each other and have a dialogue on core issues that affect their security. In the mid-nineties, the Arms Control and Regional Security (ACRS) working group briefly served this purpose. It is clear, however, that no majority vote or one-sided resolutions in international fora can serve as a substitute for a direct, comprehensive regional security dialogue and cooperation.

Israel for its part has repeatedly expressed its commitment to sincere and open dialogue with its neighboring countries on all regional security related issues. Accordingly, Israel participated, at a senior and authoritative diplomatic level, in five rounds of multilateral consultations convened by the Finnish Under-Secretary Laajava in Switzerland and attended by many regional parties. Iran and Syria chose to avoid these consultations altogether. While Israel demonstrated its sincere commitment to the process of direct dialogue and confidence building in the region, our Arab neighbors are unfortunately committed to divisive resolutions like the so called "The Risk of Nuclear Proliferation in the Middle East" in this committee which purports to embarrass Israel and single it out. A similar draft resolution entitled "Israeli Nuclear Capabilities", submitted by the Arab group to the IAEA, was clearly rejected by the 58th General Conference of that Agency only a few weeks ago. Voting against these resolutions is a vote for tolerance and dialogue.

Israel regrets the Arab group's choice to choose a path of confrontation rather than one of conciliation, which only serves short-sighted political interests. These resolutions hamper the prospects for a better security environment in the Middle East region. Despite the negative Arab attitude, Israel remains committed to engage directly with its Arab neighbors, as it has done in the past year by participating in multilateral consultations. We have agreed to participate in a further round of consultations proposed by Finnish Under-Secretary, Laajava and we call upon
our neighbors to commit to direct dialogue based on the principle of consensus. This form of engagement will remain a critical factor in breaking the deadlock which the Arab group has now created.

Thank you