

National Statement: Egypt

April 01, 2016

Egypt Statement at the fourth Nuclear Security Summit

Washington D.C.

(32 March – 1 April 2016)

Mr. President,

In line with our longstanding support of initiatives aimed at strengthening the international non-proliferation regime through collaborative and multilateral mechanisms, Egypt's participation in the 2010 Washington Summit on Nuclear Security came as a positive response to President Obama's initiative on dealing with the threats and dangers related to nuclear security. Egypt has also been keen to effectively take part in various following meetings to build on this initiative, including the Seoul 2012 and the Hague 2014 summits, as well as various preparatory meetings in-between those landmark conferences.

The convention of the Washington 2016 Summit is indeed a new milestone on our path to enhance national, regional and international cooperation frameworks in the field of nuclear security. Over the past six years, much thought and engagement, as well as many initiatives have been invested by the international community towards this end to enable states to uphold their responsibilities in consolidating the very culture of nuclear security. It is time for an honest appraisal of our collective efforts in this regard, guided by the shared objective of strengthening the non-proliferation regime, and, in-turn, enhancing international peace and stability.

Egypt has always emphasized its full support of international efforts to implement the results of the three previous summits, and in so doing our vision for the international community's collective cooperation in the field of nuclear security has always been guided by a number of key principles that I would like to once again re-iterate before you today:

First:

We believe that nuclear security issues are best dealt with within a comprehensive framework that provides for the implementation of nuclear security procedures on all nuclear materials without exception. This most certainly includes materials used for military purposes, and especially those used for the making of nuclear weapons.

Second:

Achieving real progress towards supporting nuclear security is closely connected to progress achieved towards nuclear disarmament. In conjuncture with the notable focus on issues related to nuclear security over the past few years, the international community is required to prioritize achieving a qualitative shift in its effort towards the ultimate goal of nuclear disarmament. For within the current regional and international security environment, it is both dangerous and absurd to allow certain nuclear programs and facilities to remain outside the umbrella of the comprehensive safeguard system without effective international monitoring, verification, or access. This leads us to stress once again the fundamental importance Egypt attributes to the establishment of a Nuclear Weapons Free Zone in the Middle East. Establishing the Zone is indeed a matter of utmost urgency that requires the consolidation of the international community's political will to fully implement respective NPT review conference decisions in this regard.

Third:

The inalienable right to benefit from the peaceful uses of nuclear power remains one of the three pillars of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. The implementation of nuclear security procedures should in no way put conditions on, or limit the ability of states to exercise this right. Ultimately, nuclear security is a cooperative and not a restrictive objective.

Fourth:

The ultimate responsibility for the implementation of nuclear security procedures lies with member states. Such implementation should remain voluntary and in conformity with the respective state's internal legislations, as well as with its international obligations.

Fifth:

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is the most qualified international entity to take the leading role in the implementation of nuclear security procedures. The Agency's resources and accumulated scientific and practical experiences will be invaluable in providing needed technical support to member states in this context, should they so request.

Mr. President,

In light of the challenges Egypt faces in the energy sector, and given the challenges traditionally related to relying on conventional sources of energy, we have announced plans last November to build our first nuclear power station in the 'Al-Dabaa' region.

The Power station, which will be the core of a nuclear program that aims at embedding nuclear know-how for peaceful purposes, will include four nuclear reactors that have a capacity of 1200 Megawatts each, with an estimated total cost of ca. USD 10 Billion.

As part of our effort to secure the success of this major project, Egypt has put special emphasis on ensuring the highest degree of conformity with nuclear security and safety standards. In the field of nuclear security especially, Egypt has taken important steps to upgrade current legislative and institutional frameworks, including the promulgation of law 7 of 2010 and its executive regulations, upgrading material protection systems of our two existing research reactors and their facilities, intensifying capacity-building activities and training of our human resources in the field, enhancing international cooperation through the accession to the IAEA's International Network

for Nuclear Security Education, and, not least, the finalization of a comprehensive national plan for nuclear security support, in collaboration with the IAEA. These steps represent a clear demonstration of the awareness by our national institutions of the fundamental significance of upholding their responsibilities related to nuclear security.

In conclusion, and as Egypt re-iterates its belief in the mutually supportive connection between an enhanced international non-proliferation regime and international peace and stability, we remain committed to working towards preserving the needed balance between the three pillars of that regime: Nuclear Disarmament, Non-proliferation, and the inalienable, unconditional and limitless right of states to benefit from the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.