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Toward the 2015 NPT Review Conference: Attitudes and Expectations of Member States in the Middle East

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Executive Summary

What might happen if States Parties from one of the most volatile regions in the world were to reconsider their membership of the principle international treaty that controls the deadliest weapons on Earth? Almost 20 years since the indefinite extension of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), members of the Arab League have threatened to reconsider their position toward that extension on the basis that there has been no progress on the 1995 resolution associated with establishing a Middle East Zone free from weapons of mass destruction. This resolution was considered as part of the political deal to extend the Treaty indefinitely, ensuring the success of the NPT review process is closely associated with achieving progress on the Zone's establishment.

This briefing is published in advance of the UN First Committee in October 2014 at which member states will be discussing key issues such as the Helsinki Conference and nuclear proliferation in the Middle East as well as announcing the Chair of next year's NPT Review Conference. It reports on the perspectives and expectations of Arab and Iranian officials toward the 2015 NPT Review Conference, drawing from a variety of primary and secondary sources, including in-person

interviews with representatives from Egypt, Iraq, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Qatar and Iran.

The report is intended to convey official Arab and Iranian positions and the rationale behind them, not to offer a comprehensive analysis of the prospects for progress or pass judgment on the balance between these and other perspectives.

The overwhelming sentiment among Middle East officials is one of concern and ubiquitous frustration. They are aggrieved with the lack of progress in achieving the objectives of the non-proliferation regime generally, feeling double-crossed over increasingly stringent non-proliferation burdens they are expected to bear, while they perceive the nuclear weapon states to be reneging on their Treaty commitments to disarm. Specifically, they cited several challenges to the credibility and health of the NPT regime, including: the indefinite postponement of the Helsinki conference on a WMD-Free Zone in the Middle East, the paucity of substantial progress toward nuclear disarmament, and the perceived Treaty lacuna in dealing convincingly with proliferation risks.

Officials expressed deep disquiet over Israel's nuclear arsenal, considered a major stumbling block to achieving Treaty universality and the establishment of a WMD Free Zone in the region. They reprimanded what they perceive as Israeli unwillingness to engage constructively in Zone-related discussions and categorized Israeli demands to include conventional weapons in the conference's agenda as an attempt to delay and obstruct progress on nuclear disarmament. Officials also expressed frustration over the nuclear weapon states' modernization of their nuclear arsenals, the continued emphasis on nuclear weapons in security doctrines, and policies of nuclear-sharing and extended nuclear deterrence, which they perceive as going against the Treaty's spirit and disarmament obligations. Issues over the Iranian nuclear program and related tensions between non-proliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy also emerged as troubling developments.

Despite this frustration, support for the NPT and an expressed desire for a successful 2015 Review Conference remained strong. Middle East states feel a relative lack of political leverage within the regime but warn that lack of substantial progress, especially on convening the Helsinki conference, would lead to their "reconsidering" the NPT's indefinite extension. The lack of clarity about what this "reconsidering" statement might mean in practice, however, considerably undermines the credibility of any implied threat behind it. Though it does not appear to include a threat of Treaty withdrawal in the immediate term, other NPT member states would do well to take the situation more seriously than they appear to be. The health of the regime, which depends upon the good will and active positive participation of its members, is under strain; a situation that could result in potentially severe consequences for global security and stability.

Putting the NPT in a Middle East Context

The quandary facing the NPT

Opened for signature in 1968, the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)¹ entered into force in 1970, based on the grand bargain that non-nuclear weapon states (NNWS) would forfeit any aspirations to develop nuclear weapons and accept limitations on their activities, while nuclear weapon states (NWS) agreed

to engage in a path toward nuclear disarmament and to share with NNWS the benefits of peaceful nuclear energy.² It currently stands as the "only binding commitment in a multilateral treaty to the goal of disarmament," with 190 states as signatories.³

Almost 45 years after the entry into force of the NPT and 20 years after its indefinite extension, there is evidence to suggest that Middle East NPT member states see the regime's credibility crumbling as a result of the impasse over nuclear disarmament and more particularly, the lack of progress on a 1995 resolution on the establishment of a WMD-Free Zone (WMDFZ) in the Middle East, associated with the Treaty's indefinite extension.⁴

How did we get to this point?

The WMDFZ idea evolved from a call to establish a nuclear weapon-free zone in the Middle East. The Israeli Committee for Denuclearization of the Middle East advocated for a zone free of nuclear weapons (NWFZ) back in 1962, but the idea did not gain momentum until 1974 when it was introduced to the UN General Assembly by Iran and adopted as a resolution ever since. By this time, however, Israel had already developed its own nuclear arsenal and was reluctant to sign the NPT. Israel remains outside the Treaty to this day.⁵

Egypt later broadened the NWFZ concept in 1990, when it included other weapons of mass destruction (WMD) into the Zone's scope and lobbied strongly to galvanize support for its proposal at NPT meetings and within the United Nations. On May 11, 1995, states parties to the NPT agreed by consensus to extend the Treaty indefinitely, on the shared understanding that this decision was linked to an agreement to take steps toward the establishment of a WMD-Free Zone in the Middle East, otherwise known as the 1995 Middle East resolution. The 1995 addendum is seen as a seminal contributor to the Treaty's life extension, and Arab states and Iran expect its full implementation. Moreover, the successful 2010 NPT Review Conference included in its final document a commitment to hold a conference by the end of 2012 to initiate discussions about the modalities of a future Zone.⁶ Providing such a timeframe raised expectations for achieving progress on a Zone, as well as for the 2015 NPT Review Cycle.

The NPT in the Middle East today

NPT Member States future Parties to a Mideast WMD Free Zone¹

Algeria	Mauritania
Bahrain	Morocco
Comoros	Oman
Djibouti	Qatar
Egypt	Saudi Arabia
Iran	Somalia
Iraq	Sudan
Jordan	Syria
Kuwait	Tunisia
Lebanon	UAE
Libya	Yemen

1. According to a 1991 UN report, the States mentioned in this list along with Israel and Palestine, would be the future Parties to a WMD Free Zone in the Middle East. The delineation of the Zone remains subject of debate, however. A 1989 IAEA report demarked it “from Libya in the West to Iran in the East, and from Syria in the North to Yemen in the South.” For more information, refer to “Effective and Verifiable Measures which would Facilitate the Establishment of a Nuclear-weapon-free Zone in the Middle East,” UNODA, New York, 1991 and “Technical Study on Different Modalities of the Application of Safeguards in the Middle East, IAEA, August 1989.

Mideast Member States register high frustration

While Middle East officials feel that their countries are in compliance with non-proliferation obligations, they fear that the Treaty’s depositary states have mothballed, with near-impunity, the implementation of key commitments. Among these commitments, the indefinite postponement of the Helsinki conference that was to be held in 2012, and the perceived failure to deliver significant, tangible results on nuclear disarmament, have led some states to question the credibility of the Treaty itself.

The Egyptian delegation walked out of the 2013 NPT Preparatory Committee (PrepCom) in protest over the failure to hold the conference in Helsinki. Other Arab states and Iran also derided the postponement. Their frustration carried over to the 2014 NPT PrepCom, where they questioned the credibility of the NPT’s review process. As reckoned by Egypt in its address:

This growing disconnect between what should be done under the NPT and what is being actually done, often in contradiction to the Treaty, brings to the forefront the question if we are still on the right track towards realizing Treaty universality, advancing nuclear disarmament, or even our ability to review the [Treaty’s] implementation.⁷

In private interviews, Arab officials further warned that any progress or lack thereof on the WMD Free Zone would be the paramount determinant of the success of the 2015 Review Conference.⁸

Expectations and challenges ahead of the 2015 RevCon

Interviewed Arab and Iranian officials pointed out that Israel’s refusal to attend the Helsinki conference and its continued abstention from the NPT – a key stumbling block to achieving Treaty universality – harmed the future prospects for the whole regime. Other enumerated challenges included: “the lack of concrete steps toward disarmament; issues of noncompliance and continued nuclear proliferation threats.”⁹

• **On the Helsinki process**

Expectation:

Convening the Helsinki conference prior to the 2015 RevCon is considered a top priority.

Arab and Iranian leaderships expect the Helsinki conference to be held prior to the 2015 NPT review cycle, and for the process to continue beyond next year’s Review Conference. They agree that the Helsinki conference is an important first step toward a long-term process with working groups to build an effective Zone. A failure to convene the conference or establish the process would be seen as catastrophic. There is a heavy expectation on the shoulders of the co-conveners to ensure this does not happen.¹⁰

Challenges:

Though modest progress on convening the Helsinki conference has been achieved, including a series of meetings to discuss a conference date, modalities and outcomes, a conference date has yet to be determined, and time is running out.¹¹

Arab and Iranian leaders described four main challenges as major roadblocks to further progress:

1. Other countries in the region are genuinely engaging in the process, but they believe that Israel seems unwilling to compromise, and will only participate on its own terms.

“From an Arab point of view, the most serious problem has been the lack of political will to engage by the Israelis.”¹² Arab leaders argue that they have done everything within their power to facilitate progress, but that Israeli insistence that the Helsinki agenda includes regional security and confidence-building measures deliberately diverts attention from regional attempts to control WMD.¹³

As explained by Emily Landau and Shimon Stein, “Israel strongly advocates an incremental approach that views arms control as a long process of confidence building and gradual political transformation, leading eventually to successful negotiations and the establishment of a WMD-free zone.”¹⁴ Interviewed Arab leaders, on the other hand, look at this process as a distraction, and an excuse to prolong discussions about the Zone, without achieving any meaningful or tangible results on nuclear disarmament. They see existing WMD regimes as appropriate mechanisms, and resent Israel’s refusal to join them. Israel’s strategy of negotiating along a ‘long corridor’ deepens such resentment.¹⁵

2. Mideast officials resent what they perceive to be a lack of political will on the part of the conference’s co-conveners, especially the United States.

Arab and Iranian officials share the view that the practice of double standards in the region, particularly US protection of Israeli exceptionalism regarding their deployment of nuclear weapons, lowers their confidence in the NPT, and jeopardizes the achievement of further progress on the Helsinki process. As explained by Wael Al Assad from the Arab League, “it took the conveners over fourteen months to appoint Ambassador Jaakko Laajava as facilitator and Finland as host country (...) The delay was never explained and was perceived by the Arab states as a sign of disinterest by the conveners, especially the United States.”¹⁶

3. Though Israel is not a member of the NPT, the Helsinki conference and discussions about establishing the WMD Free Zone should continue to take place under an NPT framework.

The Iranian statement to the 2013 PrepCom iterated, “should the Conference on a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East be convened in the future, it shall be dealt with like a subsidiary forum of the Review Conference process and therefore should follow its procedures.”¹⁷ The agreement to hold the conference was made within the NPT 2010 deal, and all states parties are therefore accountable to the broad NPT membership to deliver on this agenda. In direct contradiction, Israel insists the 2010 RevCon outcome document and its recommendations do not relate to them, as they are not party to either the NPT or the 2010 deal. They do not believe it to be just that other states can determine the basis for negotiations that impact directly upon their own national security and international legal obligations. They see this as a “one-dimensional” approach that targets Israel’s nuclear weapons capability without addressing its fundamental national security concerns.¹⁸

In response, Egypt argues that the current Helsinki process was built around Israeli calls for a regional process. They believe that Israeli concerns can be appropriately met by ensuring the process remains as inclusive and accommodating of Israeli concerns as possible without derailing it or making it unduly complex.

Officials also repeatedly referenced that a core objective of the NPT (and a requirement for its long-term sustainability) is achieving Treaty universality. Discussions of the WMD Free Zone through an NPT framework are essential to fulfilling this provision.

Lastly, some officials seem to deny any sensitivity over which international platform calls for Zone-related discussions. They contend that although Israel is not party to the NPT or the 2010 deal, it has repeatedly voted in favor of the UN resolution for the establishment of a nuclear weapon-free zone in the Middle East, at least in principle. A refusal to attend the Helsinki conference without prejudice or specific commitment appears to call into question its sincerity to that principle.

4. The sequencing problem of “security first” versus “disarmament first” is an Israeli attempt to halt progress on nuclear disarmament.

Israel originally said it would only negotiate on a WMD Free Zone when there was comprehensive peace in the region. This became known as the “security” or “peace first” position, where Israel seeks assurances for regional security before it considers nuclear disarmament. Egyptian leaders claim that when they attempted a “security first” process in the Arms Control and Regional Security (ACRS) forum, the Israelis arrived “empty-handed.” ACRS followed the Madrid peace conference in 1991 and brought together representatives from 13 Arab states, the Palestinian Territories and Israel. Egypt argues that Israel took advantage of the ACRS process to demand further prior concessions from Arab countries before it would address its own nuclear disarmament responsibilities.

Though Iran was not an active participant of the ACRS process, Iranian officials are clear on their opinion about the “disarmament first” versus “security first” dichotomy: “If you want your security concerns to be met, you should meet the security concerns of others.”¹⁹ They consider Israel’s nuclear arsenal as a direct threat to its neighbors, making peaceful relations dependent upon its dismantlement. In other words, a “security first” approach would necessarily involve Israeli nuclear disarmament.

• **On the WMD Free Zone at large**

Expectation:

Continue working toward the establishment of the Zone, in the run up to the 2015 RevCon and beyond.

There was some discontent expressed that the co-conveners had not put sufficient pressure on states to accede to the NPT to achieve universalization; they are expected to communicate, “at least in their speeches,” that Israel and other non-members should immediately accede to the Treaty.

Challenges:

Arab and Iranian leaders enumerated some additional challenges associated with the establishment of the Zone at large, including:

1. Israel is the main obstacle to establishing the WMD Free Zone in the region and presents a major stumbling block to achieving Treaty universality. Israel’s NPT accession should be immediate.

Arab and Iranian leadership share the view that “the only obstacle for the establishment of a nuclear weapon-free zone in the Middle East is the nuclear weapons and unsafeguarded nuclear activities of the Israeli regime.”²⁰

Furthermore, “Israel remains the only state in the Middle East that has not yet become a party to the NPT and the only State in the region with a nuclear-weapon capability, and therefore Israel’s accession to the Treaty as a non-nuclear- weapon State remains central to achieving the goal of universal adherence to the Treaty in the Middle East.”²¹

This will all sound to some as a rather focused Israel-bashing perspective. But hidden within holds the promise of something held dear by Israel – the prospects of recognition by its neighbors and normalization of relations. The outcome of a successful Helsinki process that leads to negotiations on a Zone would require mutual recognition between Israel and its Arab and Iranian counterparts.²²

2. Other regional challenges

Prince Turki al Faisal of Saudi Arabia has previously referenced two additional obstacles for the Zone’s establishment: “the situation with Iran and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.”²³ The ambiguity of Iran’s nuclear program is said to deepen mistrust among the future states parties to the Zone, while the Palestinian-Israeli conflict damages prospects for regional peace.

• **On nuclear disarmament**

The NPT commits the NWS (China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States) to engage readily in global reduction and elimination of nuclear stockpiles. The 2010 Action Plan included more specific demands: to reduce and eliminate “tactical nuclear weapons and nuclear sharing; diminish the role of nuclear weapons in security policies, prevent nuclear weapons use; reduce the risk of accidental use and increase transparency and mutual confidence.”²⁴

Expectation:

Halting modernization efforts by the NWS and continued implementation of their disarmament commitments.

Challenges:

The following concerns were repeatedly brought up, as violating the spirit of the NPT and contributing to its waning credibility.

1. Ongoing modernization of nuclear arsenals by the NWS,
2. Policies of extended nuclear deterrence and nuclear-weapon sharing,
3. Continued reliance and assigned value to nuclear weapons within security doctrines, and
4. Refusal to negotiate on disarmament terms.

Officials expressed deep concern over continued commitment to nuclear deterrence, modernization plans, and no credible sign of ratification of the CTBT by the United States and China. These are considered “flagrant violations of international law” and “clear indications of the continued policy of the [NWS] to evade obligations.”²⁵ Egypt further contended that policies of extended nuclear deterrence, nuclear cooperation with non-members of the NPT and continuing possession of nuclear weapons go against commitments under the Treaty.²⁶

While obligations of Nuclear-Weapon-States are clear under Article I of the Treaty, preventing them from transferring nuclear weapons to any State, practices of nuclear sharing under security arrangements, which violate Article I still continue. These practices violate at the same time commitments undertaken by [NNWS] as some of them accept stationing of nuclear weapons on their territories or build their security under nuclear umbrellas provided by nuclear-weapon-states.”²⁷

- **On non-proliferation**

Officials from some Gulf States placed greater emphasis than some of their Arab colleagues on non-proliferation issues as a concern they hope to address by the 2015 NPT review cycle.

Expectation:

To resolve the non-proliferation concerns posed by Iran.

Though there was much pessimism expressed over the prospects of a comprehensive deal with Iran, one Gulf official expressed his belief that the 2015 NPT review cycle would benefit from a resolution of the Iran conundrum that addresses non-proliferation concerns, but also one that could be used as a starting point to establish a consensus on how to deal with non-proliferation issues in the future.

More specific expectations included: the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) needs to come to the conclusion that Iran is no longer a concern; Iran needs to assure the countries in the region of the peaceful nature of its program; and strong verification mechanisms must be implemented.²⁸

Challenges:

The lack of consensus in how to address proliferation challenges in a fair manner has serious implications for the health of the non-proliferation regime.

1. **Iran and proliferation concerns**

Interviewed GCC officials voiced their support for the Joint Plan of Action, brokered between Iran and the P5+1 (E3+3) in November 2013.²⁹ Nevertheless, there remained skepticism over whether the final outcome would be satisfactory in placating regional security concerns.³⁰

2. **Saudi Arabia and proliferation concerns**

None of the GCC officials interviewed expressed concern that Saudi Arabia might develop nuclear weapons, though such a fear does surface in some analysis. Saudi Arabia is said to have close associations with the Pakistani nuclear weapons program, and there is concern that it could cooperate with them further on this, either through a direct purchase of nuclear weapons, or by seeking more formal positive security guarantees from Pakistan or China.³¹

i. Saudi Arabia is highly skeptical of the interim deal process.

Though Saudi Arabia officially welcomed the interim deal,³² the Kingdom was highly skeptical because it leaves Iran's uranium enrichment and heavy-water reactor capabilities intact. Saudi officials fear that this action sets Iran closer to being a nuclear-armed or nuclear-threshold state, in which case Tehran could become emboldened and use its nuclear-breakout capabilities as a strategic protection against conventional retaliation.³³ The lack of a final deal may exacerbate these concerns and make it more difficult for Saudi Arabia to quietly accept the extension of the interim process, without engaging in its own contingency strategies.

ii. *Saudi Arabia might fret about the lack of a deal, as it would about a final deal that seemed unsatisfactory.*

Policy experts anticipate that although "a final nuclear agreement is likely to extend the timeline for Iran's ability to break out, it is unlikely to remove this potential altogether,"³⁴ in which case Saudi Arabia and other Gulf States would remain apprehensive. In addition, the prospect of a deal that regional parties perceive as unsatisfactory, but one that is sanctioned by the international community, could also be perceived as a West-Iran détente, that would not only embolden Iran's quest for regional leadership, but might also encourage increased cooperation and rapprochement between Iran and the West.

iii. *Official and unofficial accounts have positioned Saudi Arabia as a potential nuclear proliferator if concerns over the Iran program are not solved.*

Dr. Saud Mousaed Al Tamamy, assistant professor of political theory at King Saud University (KSU) has cautioned, "If the deal fails to stop Iran from enriching uranium past 5%, and having military nuclear capability, Saudi Arabia will have the political will to develop its own nuclear program." Similarly, Prince Turki al-Faisal has declared, "Preserving our regional security requires that we, as a Gulf grouping, work to create a real balance of forces with [Iran], including in nuclear know-how."³⁵ He also warned, "Faced with a nuclear-armed Iran, the Gulf Cooperation Council members will be forced to weigh their options carefully – and possibly to acquire a nuclear deterrent of their own."³⁶

Curbing proliferation risks in the Gulf

Nuclear considerations in the Persian Gulf are heightened by the united perception that US security commitments to the region are waning. As a policy analyst explains, "Seen from Riyadh, the combination of US inaction on Syria, the interim nuclear deal in November with its arch-rival Iran and the shale gas revolution that is weaning America off Middle Eastern oil represents an unsettling shift in US commitment to the region."

In an attempt to curtail nuclear proliferation risks by heeding the threat perceptions of GCC countries toward Iran, extended deterrence has emerged as a possible policy consideration. Some analysts suggest that in the case of a nuclear-threshold Iran the US should reassure its Gulf allies by "mak[ing] explicit security guarantees that formally bring the GCC states under the US nuclear umbrella—as is the case of Japan and South Korea."²

Extension of US nuclear deterrence seems unlikely, however. As referenced by scholars Shashank Joshi and Michael Stephens, placing a nuclear umbrella over Arab allies or deploying tactical nuclear weapons to the region would represent a significant and dangerous change in US policy, not least because it would entangle the US to the unpredictability of regional crises.³ The practice of further extending formal US nuclear deterrence would also contradict Arab statements that nuclear weapon sharing and nuclear security umbrellas elsewhere challenge the credibility of the NPT regime. Suggestions of a shift in this position could introduce further unwelcomed divisions within the Arab League.

Instead, the predominant conclusion is that conventional means of reassurance, rather than extension of a US nuclear umbrella, would be a preferable, pragmatic strategy. The question remains, however, whether this would be sufficient to ease Saudi threat perceptions and discourage Riyadh from deciding to nuclearize. Indeed, though Saudi Arabia's indigenous nuclearization may seem unlikely, analysts have suggested that Riyadh could cooperate with China and Pakistan to develop, or even "purchase," its own nuclear-weapons program.

A forthright answer to this appeasement-through-reassurance question does not exist, but some analysts suggest that Saudi Arabia would not cross a nuclear red line at the expense of further alienating the West. Instead, they may use the threat of nuclearization to extract significant conventional assurance from the US.

1. See Brandon Friedman, "Alternatives to U.S. Hard Power: the Saudi response to US tactics in the Middle East." *Foreign Policy Research Institute*, January 2014.
2. See Dalia Dassa Kaye and Jeffrey Martini, "The days after a deal with Iran: regional responses to a final nuclear agreement," *Rand Corporation*, April 2014.
3. See Shashank Joshi and Michael Stephens, "An uncertain future: regional responses to Iran's nuclear program." *Royal United Services Institute*, Whitehall Report 4-13, December 2013. Pgs. 11-25 <https://www.rusi.org/downloads/assets/WHR-4-13.pdf>

Having nuclear aspirations does not equate to an active policy of nuclear weaponization. In fact, a recent Whitehall report by the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) investigated the regional perspectives toward the Iranian nuclear program and concluded that “apart from Israel, which already possesses nuclear weapons, and Saudi Arabia, nearly every regional policy elite interviewed for this study [from Egypt, Jordan, Turkey and the Gulf States] dismissed the possibility that their nation would seek its own nuclear-weapons capability.”³⁷ Even among Saudi policy elites, the report highlighted that indigenous nuclearization was not “the preferred option;” the paucity of natural resources and scientific expertise would make the path to nuclearization “costly, risky and uncertain,” and one that Saudi Arabia would avoid “unless it deem[ed] external security guarantees to have collapsed entirely.”³⁸

- **Tensions between proliferation concerns and peaceful uses of nuclear energy**

Expectation:

Proliferation concerns should not be used to restrict a state’s access to peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Middle Eastern officials have repeatedly cherished the NPT provision on peaceful uses of nuclear energy as a state’s inalienable right that cannot be curtailed on the basis of proliferation concerns, unless a country is in violation of its Treaty responsibilities. Most vocal among them was the Islamic Republic of Iran, in its address to the 2014 NPT Preparatory Committee:

Non-proliferation should not be a pretext for restricting the inalienable right of States parties to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy (...) Certain peaceful nuclear activities should not be limited on the grounds of their ‘sensitivity,’ as the Treaty does not prohibit any activity or transfer or the use of nuclear technology, equipment or material for peaceful purposes based on their sensitivity.³⁹

Challenges:

The banner of “peaceful uses of nuclear energy” could be used to mask belligerent nuclear programs. Though none of the interviewed officials made reference to this statement as a specific challenge, it is worth

considering, based on the tensions that it creates. Indeed, Egypt and Saudi Arabia echoed Iran’s resolve to defend the inalienable right of states to engage in peaceful nuclear programs in their respective addresses to the 2014 PrepCom, but certain proliferative undertones characterized the latter. Saudi Arabia announced that it is in the phase of planning a peaceful nuclear program to match its Millennium Development Goals, but also to meet its “strategic” needs.⁴⁰

Despite frustration, the NPT remains a cherished platform

Members of the Arab League frequently declare their strong support for the NPT and its regime.⁴¹ They believe the NPT process is the only valid available international framework for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. “The problem is not the Treaty but the party states who do not implement it”, one official stated.⁴² While the Iranians believe the Treaty is “discriminatory,” they recognize that it is a rather useful tool to eliminate nuclear weapons and curtail proliferation. One official cautioned, “it should be fully implemented.”⁴³

Implications for the 2015 Review Conference

Desired outcomes of the RevCon

Middle East leaders look at the 2015 NPT Review Conference as “not an end in itself, but rather a beginning.”⁴⁴ Their expectations for subsequent actions are as follows.

- **Working toward NPT universality**

In its statement to the 2014 NPT Preparatory Committee, Iran stated, “to have an agreed plan of action and timetable for the universality of the Treaty in the Middle East should be one of the main priorities.”⁴⁵ Iranian officials later declared that the issue of NPT universality, specifically Israel’s NPT accession, would contribute to the implementation of the 1995 resolution. There is a shared frustration in the region and in the broader Non-Aligned Movement (NAM)⁴⁶ that the United States and other Western countries appear unwilling to pressure Israel to join the NPT. The NAM has called for the establishment of a

standing committee to oversee the implementation of the previous RevCon recommendations regarding “Israel’s prompt accession to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the placement of all its nuclear facilities under the IAEA full-scope safeguards.” The standing committee would be expected “to report to the 2020 Review Conference and its Preparatory Committee.”⁴⁷

- **Continue implementation of the 1995 Mideast resolution**

Implementation of the 1995 Mideast resolution was of paramount importance to all those officials interviewed, and official statements have suggested establishing a monitoring committee to promote the 1995 resolution.⁴⁸

- **Concrete progress on nuclear disarmament**

Egyptian leadership called for the development of a plan with time-bound actions for implementation of Article VI of the treaty, dealing with nuclear disarmament.⁴⁹ Iranian officials also called for the formation of a standing committee for “monitoring and verifying the implementation of [disarmament] commitments.”⁵⁰ Additional statements from the NAM and Iran urged the implementation of UN General Assembly resolution 68/32, which “called for a nuclear weapons convention, proclaimed 26 September as the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, and decided to convene a United Nations high-level international conference by 2018 to assess progress achieved in nuclear disarmament.”⁵¹ The New Agenda Coalition or NAC group, of which Egypt is a member, also stressed the need to “apply the principles of irreversibility, verifiability and transparency in relation to the implementation of [NWS] Treaty obligations.”⁵²

- **Establishment of legally-binding negative security assurances**

Egypt and other countries from the Non-Aligned Movement demanded that the 2015 RevCon initiate a series of conventions to establish a system where NWS offer negative security assurances,⁵³ and refrain from using, or threatening to use, nuclear weapons against NNWS.⁵⁴

- **Protection of the inalienable right of states parties to the Treaty to peaceful nuclear energy**

The NAM statement called for “the immediate removal of any restrictions or limitations posed on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, including restrictions on exports to other states parties of nuclear material, equipment and technology for peaceful purposes.”⁵⁵

- **Concrete steps by some stakeholders to carry forward their agendas**

- **Continued participation in the humanitarian consequences conference initiative**

The overall goal of the humanitarian initiative is to spread awareness of the consequences of the use of nuclear weapons. Middle East NPT members value the initiative as an additional tool to make headway in international nuclear disarmament, and not as an NPT replacement.

- **Continued support for the Glion-Geneva meetings**

Ambassador and Finnish facilitator of the Helsinki conference, Jaakko Laajava, set up these meetings to encourage states parties to realize consensus on a conference date, modalities and outcomes. Egyptian leadership declared that it is not interested in “arm-twisting” Israel to encourage it to attend the Helsinki conference, but rather emphasized the prospect of cooperation and compromise. Leaders from Egypt and Iran warned that inclusion of the Israeli demand for discussions about regional security and conventional weapons in the Helsinki agenda was not acceptable, believing that they would detract attention and resources from the main WMD Free Zone issues to be addressed: nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons.

- **Iran and Egypt remain adamant against ratifying the Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) at present**

Entry into force of the CTBT is one of the goals of the NPT Review process and developed action plans, yet Egypt and Iran are unwilling to make further concessions until some of their demands are met. As reckoned by Egypt, Arab states feel that they “cannot continue to attend meetings and agree on outcomes that do not get implemented, yet to be expected to abide by the concessions we gave for this outcome.”⁵⁶

There is a strong resentment in Egypt in particular surrounding the belief that when Cairo joined and ratified the NPT itself, this would be followed by Israel. Officials view their position as “basic logic” and say

that no additional commitments will be made until Israel accedes to the Treaty.⁵⁷ This was expressed in their 2009 statement at the UNGA First Committee, stating that ratifying the CTBT “would only result in widening the steep gap in commitments undertaken by states member to the NPT and states outside the Treaty which enjoy unlimited freedom in the nuclear area.”⁵⁸

Similarly, Iran has offered a list of reasons why it has chosen not to ratify the Treaty, including “lack of progress towards nuclear disarmament, upgrading and modernization of existing nuclear weapons, rejection of the CTBT by major nuclear weapon states, and acknowledgment of the possession of nuclear weapons by Israel.”⁵⁹

• **Capacity-building initiatives**

Qatari officials vowed their continued support and implementation of all WMD treaties.⁶⁰ Interviewed officials also expressed their intention to expand geographical coverage for the Doha Center for chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) training. The center conducts an annual average of 14-17 seminars and workshops, providing instruction for participants from Asia and the Middle East on how to implement the requirements of WMD treaties.

The threat of “reconsidering”

Arab states have made ominous statements about their faith in the NPT regime as a consequence of their frustration with the lack of progress achieved in key areas such as the 1995 Middle East resolution and nuclear disarmament.

From “review” to “reconsider”

In response to the US announcement of indefinite postponement of the Helsinki conference, Tunisia, speaking on behalf of the Arab League at the 2013 NPT PrepCom, threatened “to block consensus at the 2015 NPT RevCon” if there was no progress by then.⁶¹ Egypt’s statement prior to walking out of the meetings in protest, expressed similar disquiet:

The establishment of such a zone has become enshrined in the NPT as an essential element of the 1995 Conference and of the basis on which the Treaty was indefinitely extended

without a vote in 1995 (...) We cannot wait forever for the launching of a process that would lead to the establishment of this zone (...) The Arab Summit resolution in March 2012 has clearly indicated that the Arab countries will review their position vis-à-vis the non-implementation of the Action Plan.⁶²

The Iraqi delegation spoke on behalf of the Arab group at the 2014 PrepCom and delivered a similar warning: Arab states would “reconsider” their position toward the indefinite extension of the Treaty if the Helsinki conference were not convened.⁶³ Iraqi officials further emphasized that the NPT cannot be extended forever without the implementation of the 1995 resolution and the final outcome documents of the 2000 and 2010 Review Conferences. If the Helsinki conference is not convened before the 2015 Review Conference, “Arab states will take severe measures.”⁶⁴

What is meant by “reconsider” and “severe”?

Though statements from Arab leaders remain opaque about the legal and practical implications of their “reconsidering” position, withdrawal from the NPT under its Article X provision was seen as a highly undesirable outcome. Contention within the Treaty procedures of its indefinite extension seemed a more likely scenario, drawing from the united perception of the 1995 Middle East resolution as a contractual agreement, and one that Arab leaders perceive as playing a pivotal role in achieving the Treaty’s indefinite extension. However, it is not yet clear procedurally how these states would go about raising the issue and seeking a revision of the Treaty’s review process. Without such practical options, the leverage sought on other member states might seem diminished.

Egyptian diplomats are particularly aggrieved because they feel they led other Arab states to join the NPT in the belief that this would further stability and take nuclear weapons out of the regional strategic picture. Yet, they have begun to object continuing support for the unconditional indefinite duration of a treaty that they perceive as being laxly executed, especially as it pertains to the implementation of the 1995 resolution.⁶⁵ Retired Egyptian Foreign Ministry officials felt personally betrayed, expressing their regret in the 1995 NPT’s indefinite extension.⁶⁶

Politically, the Iranians expressed sympathy for the Arab statement, but cautioned that they would not formally support it until its legal and practical implications were defined.⁶⁷ They further stated, “instead of considering unimportant issues such as [Treaty] withdrawal, it would be more appropriate for the PrepCom to consider how non-parties to the Treaty can be encouraged and incentivized to accede to the Treaty as soon as possible.”⁶⁸

Thomas Graham, retired US ambassador and diplomat, who led US government efforts to achieve the permanent extension of the Treaty, outlines the legal challenge facing the Arab states, and the likely position of other member states to any suggestion of a review of the extension:

The indefinite extension is legally a part of the NPT and cannot be abrogated just like any other individual article. States of course have the right to withdraw from the entire Treaty on three months notice. That said, the Middle East Resolution was part of the political – not legal – price for indefinite extension. It is politically binding only just like Enhanced Review and The Statement of Principles and Objectives.⁶⁹

Beyond more diplomatic speeches, and possible efforts in parallel to pressurize other member states, it is difficult to see avenues for the Arab states to use legal means to bring pressure to bear within the NPT.

Conclusions

Success Markers for the 2015 Review Conference

Several considerable challenges threaten to tarnish the chances of success for the 2015 RevCon (usually determined by a final declaration and action plan agreement). However, Arab and Iranian leaders identified three main markers, which could tip the balance in favor of a successful conference.

- **Convening the Helsinki conference prior to the start of the RevCon**

The greatest sticking point to the success of the 2015 RevCon is the failure to convene the Helsinki conference. The heavy emphasis that Arab states and

possibly Iran have placed on establishing a WMDFZ in the Middle East apparently supersedes any additional concerns, even their calls for progress on nuclear disarmament. This may indicate that regional issues, along with Israel’s continuing deployment of nuclear weapons without serious negative consequences, matter more to them.

- **Make more progress on nuclear disarmament**

Middle East NPT members have made clear their expectations that NWS implement their disarmament commitments, and point to the injustice and negative impact on the efficacy of the regime as a result. A slowdown by NWS in their modernization programs and the initiation of a process to establish stronger legal negative security assurances to NNWS would register as positive developments in the run up to the 2015 conference.

- **A final Iran deal that is satisfactory to GCC states**

Part of the success or failure of the 2015 Review Conference could rest on the final outcome of the P5+1 (E3+3) negotiations with Iran and whether parties are seen as keeping up their ends of any comprehensive agreement. Failure to reach an agreement by the revised deadline of November 24, or the existence of such an agreement that is perceived as unsatisfactory to regional players, will likely aggravate Saudi threat perceptions and undermine, at least in principle, its commitment to non-proliferation. Considerations about nuclear weaponization, and its potential to be masked under a state’s inalienable right to peaceful uses of nuclear energy, might become more pronounced in the run up to the RevCon and beyond.

What to expect in case of a failed RevCon

Arab states will not openly threaten Treaty withdrawal at the 2015 RevCon. But in order to leverage their position, they have already threatened to endorse a “reconsidering” of indefinite extension position, if substantial progress on the Helsinki process and disarmament is not achieved. It is possible that they will threaten to block the adoption of a final consensus document, unless some of their demands are explicitly addressed, specifically.⁷⁰

1. The inclusion of a statement, in the final outcome document, calling for NPT universality and Israel's immediate accession to the Treaty,
2. The development of an action plan with time-bound goals for the implementation of nuclear disarmament commitments; and,
3. The establishment of a standing committee to monitor the implementation of the 1995 resolution.

With Treaty withdrawal as the only legally viable option for leverage behind this "reconsidering" position, there must be a danger that this will set Arab states onto a longer-term path where they are forced to choose between three undesirable options: to simply continue complaining without hope of impact, to climb down and accept the situation, or to leave the Treaty. All involve humiliation, and spell instability for regional security and the NPT regime.

Drawbacks to the current approach

It remains unclear whether the NPT framework is well suited to advancing discussions about the Middle East WMD Free Zone in a way that is efficient and inclusive, rather than one-dimensional. Calls for Israel to abide by a process it has not sanctioned, for its nuclear disarmament and for NPT universality, have not been conducive to the process. It may be more effective in breaking the stalemate to consider parallel tracks for discussing regional security including non-conventional and conventional weapons, as well as other issues such as Palestine, recognition and normalization.⁷¹ It would also ease some of the negative pressure that the NPT is currently facing, as a result of the overarching commitments that have been made, which exist outside the scope of the Treaty.

Outlook

Expectations are currently low for the ability of member-states to realize the twin goals of the NPT: to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons and achieve disarmament. Competing objectives appear to achieve policy priority over them. The NPT also seems an unsuited framework to deal with the broader issues surrounding any possible WMD Free Zone in the Middle East. But the health of the Treaty itself relies upon regional states and the three Helsinki

conference's co-conveners successfully holding the conference.

Deepening divisions between the co-conveners outside the process harm confidence. As does the US State Department's seeming protection of Israel's sovereign right to resist engagement (and continue to deploy nuclear weapons) at the expense of regional security and relationships. This is deeply damaging both to US reputation and to US regional non-proliferation policy objectives.⁷²

The co-conveners will in any case need to consider their response to Arab League efforts to explicitly link progress on a WMD Free Zone and the indefinite extension of the NPT. Ignoring it and hoping the problem will go away is not an effective strategy. It will deepen the frustration and humiliation and could lead to desperate (perhaps illogical) moves by the Arab states.

On the other hand, Arab states need to be careful about boxing themselves into a corner, and to be aware that without credible leverage, they may find themselves facing a set of highly undesirable choices. So far, Arabs and Israelis have largely been talking past each other, both in terms of content and choreography. Arab states will have to acknowledge the broader context within the talks, while Israel will need to acknowledge the special nature of WMD and the need for special prior treatment that acknowledges this and justifies the focus. This could be achieved by holding parallel discussions on the WMD Free Zone and on regional security that do not have formal linkages, but that demonstrate good will on both sides.

There remain substantial challenges associated with both sides' negotiating tactics based upon a lack of trust; trust that will inevitably take a long time to build. Yet there also remain opportunities for all sides to transform initiatives that currently are seen as future bargaining chips into symbols of good will and positive confidence in future agreements. One such would be simultaneous ratification of the CTBT and the Chemical Weapons Convention.

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Endnotes

¹ For a full text of the NPT, see “Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons,” UNODA.
<http://www.un.org/disarmament/WMD/Nuclear/NPTtext.shtml>

² See Thomas Graham, “Avoiding the Tipping Point.” *Arms Control Today*. Nov. 2004
https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2004_11/BookReview

³ See “Treaty of the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons” UNODA.
<http://www.un.org/disarmament/WMD/Nuclear/NPT.shtml>

⁴ See Sameh Aboul-Enein’s essay “Making Progress on the Middle East Nuclear- and WMD-Free Zone: Egypt’s NPT Pillar” included in the report “A WMD-Free Zone in the Middle East: Regional Perspectives” by the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, November 2013, pgs. 9-13,
http://belfercenter.ksg.harvard.edu/files/dp_2013-09.pdf

⁵ See Israel country profile, *Nuclear Threat Initiative*, last updated May 2014. <http://www.nti.org/country-profiles/israel/nuclear/>

⁶ Find the Final Document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference at
[http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=NPT/CONF.2010/50%20\(VOL.I\)](http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=NPT/CONF.2010/50%20(VOL.I))

⁷ See address by Egypt during the General Debate of the NPT PrepCom. April, 2014.
http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/prepcom14/statements/28April_Egypt.pdf

⁸ Based on remarks compiled from interviews with officials from the UAE and Egypt.

⁹ See statement by the UAE at the NPT PrepCom, April 2013.
http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/prepcom13/statements/22April_UAE.pdf

¹⁰ Author interviewed officials from Qatar, Iraq, Egypt, the UAE and Iran, who also mentioned these challenges.

¹¹ See statement by Iran at the 2014 PrepCom, on Cluster II specific issues: establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. May, 2014.
http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/prepcom14/statements/1May_Iran2.pdf

¹² The series of meetings were held in Glion, Switzerland (October 2013, November 2013 and February 2014) and in Geneva (May and June 2014)

¹³ See Wael Al Assad’s essay “An Arab Perspective on the Quest for a WMD-Free Zone in the Middle East: Pipe-Dream or Security Option?” included in the report “A WMD-Free Zone in the Middle East: Regional Perspectives” by the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, November 2013, pgs. 46-49
http://belfercenter.ksg.harvard.edu/files/dp_2013-09.pdf

¹⁴ See Gaukhar Mukhatzhanova, “Rough Seas Ahead: Issues for the 2015 NPT Review Conference,” *Arms Control Today*, Volume 44, number 3, April 2014.
https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2014_04/Rough-Seas-Ahead_Issues-for-the-2015-NPT-Review-Conference

¹⁵ See essay by Emily B. Landau and Shimon Stein, titled “Where Do We Go From Here? A New Israeli Approach to Tension-Reduction in the Middle East?” included in the report “A WMD-Free Zone in the Middle East: Regional Perspectives” by the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, November 2013, pgs. 23-25
http://belfercenter.ksg.harvard.edu/files/dp_2013-09.pdf

¹⁶ See “Belief in the WMD Free Zone: Designing the corridor to Helsinki and beyond,” *BASIC*, November 2013.
<http://www.basicint.org/sites/default/files/wmdfz-israel.pdf>

¹⁷ See Wael Al Assad’s essay “An Arab Perspective on the Quest for a WMD-Free Zone in the Middle East: Pipe-Dream or Security Option?” included in the report “A WMD-Free Zone in the Middle East: Regional Perspectives” by the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, November 2013, pgs. 46-49
http://belfercenter.ksg.harvard.edu/files/dp_2013-09.pdf

¹⁸ See report NPT/CONF.2015/PC.II/5 submitted by Iran to the 2013 NPT PrepCom in Geneva, on April 2013
<http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/prepcom13/reports/5.PDF>

¹⁹ See “Belief in the WMD Free Zone: Designing the corridor to Helsinki and beyond,” *BASIC*, November 2013.
<http://www.basicint.org/sites/default/files/wmdfz-israel.pdf>; and essay by Emily B. Landau and Shimon Stein, titled “Where Do We Go From Here? A New Israeli Approach to Tension-

Reduction in the Middle East?” included in the report “A WMD-Free Zone in the Middle East: Regional Perspectives” by the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, November 2013, pgs. 23-25

http://belfercenter.ksg.harvard.edu/files/dp_2013-09.pdf

¹⁹ Based on remarks compiled from interviews with officials from Iran.

²⁰ See statement by Iran at the 2014 PrepCom, on Cluster II specific issues: establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. May, 2014.

http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/prepcom14/statements/1May_Iran2.pdf

²¹ See Sameh Aboul-Enein’s essay “Making Progress on the Middle East Nuclear- and WMD-Free Zone: Egypt’s NPT Pillar” included in the report “A WMD-Free Zone in the Middle East: Regional Perspectives” by the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, November 2013, pgs. 9-13

²² See Marc Finaud, “A third way toward a WMD-free Middle East.” *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*. December, 2013. <http://thebulletin.org/third-way-toward-wmd-free-middle-east>

²³ See essay by Prince Turki Al Faisal, “The Proposed WMD-Free Zone in the Middle East: A Saudi Perspective” included in the report “A WMD-Free Zone in the Middle East: Regional Perspectives” by the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, November 2013, pp. 35-37.

²⁴ See “The NPT Action Plan Monitoring Report” *Reaching Critical Will*, March 2014, http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Publications/2010-Action-Plan/NPT_Action_Plan_2014.pdf

²⁵ See report on “Implementation of article VI,” NPT/CONF.2015/PC.II/6 submitted by Iran to the 2013 NPT PrepCom, April 2013, <http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/prepcom13/reports/6.PDF>

²⁶ See statement by Egypt at the General Debate of the 2013 NPT PrepCom, April, 2014, http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/prepcom14/statements/28April_Egypt.pdf

²⁷ See statement by Egypt on Cluster II issues: Implementation of the provisions of the Treaty relating to Non-Proliferation of Nuclear weapons, Safeguards, and nuclear-weapon-free zones; NPT Preparatory Committee, May 2014, http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/prepcom14/statements/1May_Egypt.pdf

²⁸ Views as expressed by an Emirati official in an interview with the author whilst at the 2014 NPT PrepCom.

²⁹ The P5+1 or E3+3 includes: the US, the UK, Russia, France, China, and Germany.

³⁰ The interim deal committed Iran to keep uranium enrichment at 5% or below, down-blend its uranium stockpile enriched up to 20%, halt the construction of the heavy water reactor in Arak, and of new uranium enrichment facilities, and permit enhanced IAEA monitoring. For more information, refer to “The NPT Action Plan Monitoring Report” *Reaching Critical Will*, March 2014

http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Publications/2010-Action-Plan/NPT_Action_Plan_2014.pdf

³¹ See Olli Heinonen and Simon Henderson, “Nuclear Kingdom: Saudi Arabia’s Atomic Ambitions.” *The Washington Institute*, March 2014.

³² See Dalia Dassa Kaye and Jeffrey Martini, “The days after a deal with Iran: regional responses to a final nuclear agreement,” Rand corporation, April, 2014. Pg. 11 http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/perspectives/PE100/PE122/RAND_PE122.pdf

³³ See Shashank Joshi and Michael Stephens, “An uncertain future: regional responses to Iran’s nuclear program.” *Royal United Services Institute*, Whitehall Report 4-13, December 2013, pp. 11-25, <https://www.rusi.org/downloads/assets/WHR-4-13.pdf>

³⁴ See Dalia Dassa Kaye and Jeffrey Martini, “The days after a deal with Iran: regional responses to a final nuclear agreement,” Rand corporation, April, 2014, p. 2 http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/perspectives/PE100/PE122/RAND_PE122.pdf

³⁵ See “Saudi Prince Urges Mideast Counterbalance to Iran’s Nuclear Know-How,” *Global Security Newswire*, April 2014. <http://www.nti.org/gsn/article/saudi-prince-urges-gulf-countries-balance-irans-nuclear-know-how/>

³⁶ See Brandon Friedman, “Alternatives to US Hard Power: the Saudi response to US tactics in the Middle East.” *Foreign Policy Research Institute*, January 2014, <http://www.fpri.org/articles/2014/01/alternatives-us-hard-power-saudi-response-us-tactics-middle-east>

³⁷ See Shashank Joshi and Michael Stephens, “An uncertain future: regional responses to Iran’s nuclear program.” *Royal United Services Institute*, Whitehall Report 4-13, December 2013, p. 86, <https://www.rusi.org/downloads/assets/WHR-4-13.pdf>

³⁸ *Ibid*

³⁹ See statement by Iran on Cluster II: Implementation of the provisions of the Treaty relating to non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, safeguards, and nuclear-weapon-free zones, to the NPT PrepCom, May, 2014.

http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/prepcom14/statements/1May_Iran.pdf

⁴⁰ This information comes from notes that the author of this report took during the General Debate at the 2014 NPT Preparatory Committee. No available transcript exists for Saudi Arabia's statements.

⁴¹ The Arab League currently has 22 members including: Algeria, Bahrain, Comoros, Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, the Palestinian Territories, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, the UAE, and Yemen. See address of The Arab League statement to the 2010 NPT Review Conference, May 2010, expressed strong support for the NPT

(http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/revcon2010/statements/6May_ArabLeague.pdf). See also, for example, Sameh Aboul-Enein's essay "Making Progress on the Middle East Nuclear- and WMD-Free Zone: Egypt's NPT Pillar" included in the report "A WMD-Free Zone in the Middle East: Regional Perspectives" by the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, November 2013, pgs. 9-13

⁴² Statement by an Emirati official in an interview with the author.

⁴³ Statement by an Iranian official in an interview with the author.

⁴⁴ See statement by Egypt at the General Debate of the 2013 NPT PrepCom. April, 2014, http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/prepcom14/statements/28April_Egypt.pdf

⁴⁵ See statement by Iran at the NPT PrepCom, April-May 2014, http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/prepcom14/statements/30April_Iran.pdf

⁴⁶ The Non-Aligned Movement or NAM is composed of 115 states, including all Mideast NPT members (i.e. Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Iran, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, UAE, and Yemen).

⁴⁷ See working paper NPT/CONF.2015/PC.III/WP.2 submitted by the Group of Non-Aligned States on "Regional Issues: Middle East," March 2014, <http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/prepcom14/documents/WP2.pdf>

⁴⁸ See the statement by Iran, NPT/CONF.2015/PC.II/5, on "Establishment of a nuclear weapon free zone in the Middle East," April, 2013,

http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=NPT/CONF.2015/PC.II/5. See recommendations 44 and 69 at the 2009 NPT PrepCom and the 2010 NPT Review Conference, respectively. A full list of recommendations can be accessed at the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) Disarmament Database by the James Martin Center for Non-Proliferation Studies, <http://cns.miis.edu/nam/index.php/site/issueViews?fid=3&cid=16&cname=Institutional+Issues>

⁴⁹ Statement by an Egyptian official during interview with the author.

⁵⁰ See the statement by Iran, NPT/CONF.2015/PC.II/5, on "Establishment of a nuclear weapon free zone in the Middle East," April, 2013 http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=NPT/CONF.2015/PC.II/5

⁵¹ See statement by the Republic of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement at the NPT PrepCom, April 2014. http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/prepcom14/statements/28APRIL_NAM.pdf

⁵² See address by Ireland on behalf of the New Agenda Coalition to the General Debate at the NPT PrepCom, April 2014. http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/prepcom14/statements/28April_NAC.pdf

⁵³ Currently, China is the only NWS that has provided a negative security assurance of no first-use. The official position of other nuclear weapon states is that they will not use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against NNWS that are in compliance with their non-proliferation obligations. For more information, see "The NPT Action Plan Monitoring Report" *Reaching Critical Will*, March 2014 http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Publications/2010-Action-Plan/NPT_Action_Plan_2014.pdf

⁵⁴ See statement by the Republic of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement at the NPT PrepCom, April 2014. http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/prepcom14/statements/28APRIL_NAM.pdf

⁵⁵ Ibid

⁵⁶ See statement by Egypt on "Cluster II specific issues: Regional issues, including with respect to the Middle East and implementation of the 1995 Middle East Resolution" at the NPT PrepCom, April 2013, http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/prepcom13/statements/29April_Egypt.pdf

⁵⁷ Remarks by an Egyptian official in interview with the author.

⁵⁸ See "The NPT Action Plan Monitoring Report" *Reaching Critical Will*, March 2014, pg. 66

http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Publications/2010-Action-Plan/NPT_Action_Plan_2014.pdf

⁵⁹ Ibid

⁶⁰ These include the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), and the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC).

⁶¹ See Working paper submitted by Tunisia on behalf of the states members of the League of Arab States, NPT/CONF.2015/PC.II/WP.34, April 2013.
http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=NPT/CONF.2015/PC.II/WP.34. Arab states have used this tactic of threatening to block consensus on the final outcome document, at the 2010 NPT review Conference. See Wael Al Assad's essay "An Arab Perspective on the Quest for a WMD-Free Zone in the Middle East: Pipe-Dream or Security Option?" included in the report "A WMD-Free Zone in the Middle East: Regional Perspectives" by the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, November 2013, pgs. 46-49.

⁶² See statement by Egypt during Cluster II Specific issues: regional issues, including with respect to the Middle East and implementation of the 1995 Middle East resolution, at the NPT Preparatory Committee, April 2013.
http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/prepcom13/statements/29April_Egypt.pdf

⁶³ See statement by Iraq on behalf of the Arab Group (transcript is available in Arabic only). Author was present at the NPT PrepCom meeting and later interviewed officials about what was meant by the inclusion of "reconsider" in the statement.
http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/prepcom14/statements/29April_Iraq.pdf

⁶⁴ Remarks by an Iraqi official in an interview with the author.

⁶⁵ Remarks by Egyptian and Iraqi officials in interviews with the author.

⁶⁶ Remarks by retired officials from the Egyptian Foreign Ministry in an interview with the author.

⁶⁷ Remarks by an Iranian official in an interview with author.

⁶⁸ See statement by Iran on Cluster III Specific Issues: Other Provisions of the Treaty, which included a discussion about the stipulations of Treaty withdrawal at the NPT PrepCom, May 2014.
http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/npt/prepcom14/statements/6May_Iran.pdf

⁶⁹ Thomas Graham's response to author's inquiry on issue of NPT's indefinite extension and legal options, email July 11, 2014.

⁷⁰ Author arrived at these conclusions based on the Arab and Iranian statements and demands, which were referenced under "Desired outcomes of the 2015 NPT Review Conference."

⁷¹ See "Belief in the WMD Free Zone: Designing the corridor to Helsinki and beyond," *BASIC*, November 2013.
<http://www.basicint.org/sites/default/files/wmdfz-israel.pdf>

⁷² Ibid



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