



Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons as well as other weapons of mass destruction : France's commitment

Working paper submitted by France

France vigorously reaffirms its commitment to the Resolution adopted by the 1995 Non-Proliferation Treaty Review and Extension Conference on establishing a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons as well as other weapons of mass destruction. It urges all States concerned to implement the resolution so that progress can be made towards lasting peace in the Middle East and the achievement of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems in the region.

1. France is already contributing actively to creating the right conditions for achieving the objectives of the 1995 Resolution.

First of all, France makes constant efforts to ease regional tensions. France is deeply committed to the Middle East peace process, and to stability in the region. To this end, France launched the Union for the Mediterranean project, which held its first summit meeting on 13 July 2008. The joint declaration adopted at the end of the Summit reaffirmed the intention of all Parties to work towards establishing a mutually and effectively verifiable Middle East zone free of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems.

Secondly, France's action to promote effective implementation of the 1995 Resolution consists of ensuring that all States Parties to the NPT comply with their nuclear non-proliferation commitments. Together with its partners of the Six, France is working to reach a negotiated settlement of the Iranian nuclear crisis, which is a threat to regional peace and security. As stated by the Security Council in its Resolutions 1747 and 1803 on Iran's nuclear programme, a solution to the Iranian issue contribute to global non-proliferation efforts and to achieving the goal of a Middle East zone free of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems.

France is also participating in the implementation of Resolution 1995 through its unwavering support for the universalisation of the main non-proliferation instruments, which contribute to our collective security, within the framework of its bilateral relations with the countries in the region and in the relevant multilateral forums. France calls on all States that have yet to accede to the NPT to do so, and to implement its provisions fully in the meantime.

France also urges all States in the region to accede to the other existing agreements and instruments: the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, the Chemical Weapons Convention, the Biological Weapons Convention, the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material, the Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, the IAEA Additional Protocols and the Hague Code of Conduct Against Ballistic Missile Proliferation.

In order to fight proliferation more effectively, France provides its assistance for the implementation of Resolution 1540 in the region, as shown by the example of the seminar held in Abu Dhabi in October 2009. France also calls on all countries in the region to join the Proliferation Security Initiative, which provides an operational response to proliferation trafficking.

Finally, France urges all States in the region to support and take an active part in the upcoming negotiations of a Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty. Once this Treaty enters into force, it will extend verification to States that have not placed all their nuclear facilities under IAEA safeguards. Pending the signature of the Treaty, France calls on all States concerned that have not yet done so to declare an immediate moratorium on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons, and to place the largest possible number of their nuclear facilities under IAEA safeguards.

France supports and takes part in the action of the European Union, which has also made a strong commitment to implementation of the 1995 Resolution. For example, the European Union organised a seminar on this topic in June 2008. In preparation for the Review Conference, it has offered to organise a further seminar to start looking at the practical and technical issues of establishing a Middle East zone free of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems.

There is a topic that could help build confidence in the region, by allowing the countries concerned to address the challenges of climate change, development and energy security together. This topic is civil nuclear energy cooperation. As the President of the French Republic stated at the Conference on Access to Civil Nuclear Energy held in Paris on 8 and 9 March 2010, France is ready to cooperate in the area of civil nuclear energy with all countries that live up to their international commitments. France would like to cooperate with its partners in the region on establishing a suitable environment for developing civil nuclear energy under the best conditions regarding non-proliferation, safety and security. It has signed eight such cooperation agreements with countries in the region, and other agreements are planned.

2. France would like the 2010 NPT Review Conference to give new impetus to the implementation of the 1995 Resolution.

The NPT Review Conference should be an opportunity for discussing and generating political impetus for progress in six areas by 2015, in order to achieve the objectives of the 1995 Resolution, in parallel to the political efforts needed to ease tensions and resolve the sources of conflict:

- 1) Having the countries in the region accede to and implement the main instruments for fighting nuclear proliferation: place new facilities that are not yet under them under IAEA safeguards, adopt IAEA Additional Protocols and ratify the CTBT;
- 2) Having the countries in the region accede to and implement the main instruments for fighting the proliferation of other weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems;
- 3) Having all States in the region adopt practical measures to prevent proliferation: effective export controls, criminalization of proliferation acts in accordance with Resolution 1540, suppression of proliferation financing, securing of nuclear and radioactive materials;
- 4) Resuming discussions between States in the region on confidence-building measures;
- 5) Intensifying international and regional efforts to respond firmly to proliferation crises threatening the region;
- 6) Developing regional cooperation on civil nuclear energy in conjunction with the IAEA.

France proposes that these areas for progress should constitute the foundation for a practical and realistic plan of action that the Review Conference should adopt.

3. France encourages the holding of an international conference on the implementation of the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East

France proposes that the discussion to ensure the effective implementation of the plan of action could start at an international conference attended by all States in the region, the P5 countries and other States concerned, along with the UN and the IAEA./.