



*3rd London Conference on  
The Middle East Weapons of Mass Destruction Free Zone  
17 June 2008*

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## **Introductions**

### *Professor Paul Webley, SOAS*

Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentleman, my name is Paul Webley, I'm the Director and Principal of SOAS. It's a real pleasure to briefly welcome you this very sunny morning to the third CISED conference on the very difficult topic of creating a weapons of mass destruction free zone in the Middle East. I'm going to be very brief because Dan has told me that there are lots of people who need to speak and my role here is just to give you an official welcome.

But I do want to say something, which is SOAS is the UK's leading centre for the study of a range of language based humanities and social science subjects concerned with Africa, Asia and the Middle East. So we're very pleased to host this conference and I think for two main reasons. Because of the focus on the Middle East, that's very important to us, but also because as an institution we are committed to the pursuit and dissemination of knowledge in an atmosphere of open enquiry, mutual tolerance and intellectual freedom. In other words, at SOAS we have a very strong commitment to dialogue, discussion and debate. That is what we see our role as being, providing a forum where people can discuss these issues. In fact, I say forum, different kinds of forum, which is what I see happening here today.

I took up my post at SOAS almost two years ago now, and we spent most of our first year constructing a visionary strategy for our centennial, which is in 2016. Now that vision has a number of elements, but I want to highlight just three that I think are exemplified by today's conference. One of them is that SOAS wants to focus on, and engage with, the contemporary world, with contemporary issues; to promote public understanding of Africa, Asia and the Middle East; and the third thing, which is significant, is to have an impact on the world through translating research in to policy. And I think that's what again, this conference, part of a series dealing with a very difficult issue, is all about. And I hope you will all forgive just me for saying a little bit briefly about our Centre of International Studies and Diplomacy. It was established in the year 2000 so it is a very young centre, but it's very successful it takes over 100 Masters students a year, its our biggest single M course.

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It has three features, which I think are exemplary. First it's committed to teaching by cutting-edge research and thinking in the field of International Relations. Now research means careful and imaginative scholarship of course, but it also means challenging academic and political orthodoxies. And secondly, the kind of research that's carried out depends both upon the scholarly knowledge of discipline, in this case International Diplomacy and International Relations, but also a deep knowledge of particular regions and countries of the world. That's a very typical SOAS feature, that we're not a generic social science school. Social scientists you find here have a very deep understanding of the regions of the world in which they operate. And finally, the CSID has a very clear practical focus. There's a very strong interest in policy-related research and key policy issues and the Masters course draws on a large number of external contributors, ex-Ambassadors and the like. So my view, it's a great centre, it's a very important part of SOAS, it's very good that it's holding this particular conference. Now before I pass on to Dr. Plesch I just want to say how pleased I am to welcome such a distinguished group of participants from across the world to work together on this topic. I know it's a very difficult topic, but it's a very worthwhile thing to look at, and it's great to welcome you all here at SOAS.

And it would also be good, on a milder note, to welcome you back for a different kind of occasion in the future. SOAS has got a lot of things to offer, so if it's your first visit to SOAS please don't make it your last. So, over to you, Dan.

*Dr Dan Plesch, CISD, SOAS*

Well, your Excellencies Ladies and Gentleman, welcome once again to this third SOAS British Pugwash conference on the United Nations International community's objective of a (WMD) - Weapons of Mass Destruction- free zone in the Middle East. Those of you who have been to our earlier conferences will know that we begin in a slightly untraditional way, which I find useful because we have so many academic conferences, conferences on the issues of the world, there are so many disasters, and sometimes I think we lose sight of the gravity of the matters before us. So I would like you in a moment to join with me just for a minute's silence just to contemplate the destruction, the suffering, the death already in the region, which beyond our control is continuing in various parts of the region. And we hope in our deliberations over today that in some small way can help alleviate and prevent things getting even worse.

So if you could join with me now for a minute's quiet reflection I would be very grateful. Thank you.

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[One minutes silence.]

Thank you.

My first happy duty is to thank the Kingdom of Norway and the State of Qatar for their sponsorship of this event, which is most welcome. I would also like to mention that we have as usual invited all the key states in the region and the major players to speak at the conference; in case anyone asks that certainly includes Israel and the United States who sadly were not able to come this year. The speakers this year are from a different range of states and international organisations, previous occasions, with some overlap, and we welcome back for example the Republic of Egypt and welcome for the first time the Islamic Republic of Iran. I should say that our commitment to dialogue has been successful and we have had open panel discussions with people from civil society on the same panel of all the key regions and an interesting dialogue indeed between some of them it has been.

And you can find the transcripts and some of the video from those first two conferences in our centres website [www.cisd.soas.ac.uk](http://www.cisd.soas.ac.uk). I should also mention that due to affairs of the state and the demands of the press, there has been some slight change of schedule to this morning's speakers. In particular His Excellency, Dr Hussain Al-Shahristani, will be speaking just after the coffee break at 11:30am. Mr Simon Manley will be with us just as soon as the plane from Washington permits this morning. And so shortly I will ask His Excellency Wael Al-Assad, Director of Disarmament and Multilateral Affairs, League of Arab States to come to the platform. He will be followed by His Excellency Dr Ali Asghar Soltanieh and we are delighted that he has been able to come here from Vienna where he represents the Islamic Republic of Iran. And, lastly, before the coffee break we hope to see His Excellency Dr Sami Khiyami, Ambassador of Syria to the Court of St James.

I just want to say a very brief word, because we're short of time and I don't want to take up any more time than is absolutely necessary, about why CISD is holding this conference and indeed an annual conference/series on this topic.

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International Relations as an academic discourse was founded after the disastrous war of 1914-18 with the express purpose of preventing future major war. Well, a war with weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East would be clearly a disaster for humanity as a whole, and our students of that academic objective are then text routed – well, what are the issues for the international community? And what are the expressed views of the international community? And of course, on this issue, the international community has had a settled view that a Weapons of Mass Destruction – first of all, a nuclear free zone – but now a Weapons of Mass Destruction free zone, is a key objective for the international community. And indeed one can perhaps be positive in reading President Bush's remarks that 'all options are on the table' in the Middle East and perhaps hope that with our own government's renewed interest in arms control and disarmament that indeed with 'all options on the table' should and could mean the United Nations objective of a Weapons of Mass Destruction free zone in the Middle East.

For us, the zone effort isn't one in isolation; we see it is essential to revive the academic, public policy and civil society interest in disarmament. There is a deep irony of the early 21<sup>st</sup> century, of the 'noughties' as they are called, that for the first time really since the 1890's, disarmament has not been a central issue in international politics, these last few years. And indeed, if you had sat down with a group of people in the late 1980's and said, "Well if we get to the end of the Cold War, what are the outcomes we might see?" I think the one thing you would have not have found anyone to suggest is that we would have stopped disarmament and seen a new round of nationalism and militarism coming from all parts, or many parts, of the world. And that broader concern and that, one might say, deafening silence on the issue is what propels us at SOAS to, as my Director said, to challenge conventional wisdoms and to look to develop new thinking.

I'm delighted to say that Simon Manley is here. So my taking up a moment or two longer than I intended has paid dividends.

So that's why we're here as CISD and SOAS. We are delighted with the level of attendance. And I just want to say our objectives for holding these annual events; it is I think to take this key issue, this settled view of the international community and to, in the best traditions of academia and civil society, to give that voice, to provide an opportunity. We have no, I certainly individually have no particular view, as to how it should be carried out, although I think that sooner rather than later is would be perhaps not too controversial a view I might express, that we could do with having movement. But, for civil society and for academia in general, I think our role is to provide

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a forum, for people who would like to come and address this issue before a public audience, which I am delighted to say so many illustrious speakers, representing nation states, and to give them an opportunity to do this in public rather than in the closed and private rooms and where the negotiations are held, which if you're lucky feature in a minor story from Reuters as to what actually was said by the states concerned. If you want to go beyond the immediate two-minute headline it's very hard to find. And we thought rather than drawing out the views from Vienna or Geneva that we would on an annual basis provide an opportunity for states and civil society to come and express their views in public.

So thank you very much for coming. It is now my great privilege to ask to come to the platform Mr Simon Manley who is Director of Defense and Strategic Threats in the United Kingdom Foreign Office, and I think we would be churlish not to recognise the importance that the Foreign Office has attached to this event. They indeed mentioned it in their presentation in Geneva on the non-proliferation treaty as part of their commitment to developing dialogue on the issue. And I think the fact that the Foreign Office chooses to be represented here at such a high level is hopefully an important indicator of the renewed seriousness with which they are taking the issue. As one official said to me when we were discussing the conference, "We cannot remain camped on the position of 1995. We need to move on."

So we also need to move on. And I hope you will join with me in welcoming Simon Manley to the platform.

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## **Speeches by Officials**

### *Mr Simon Manley, UK FCO*

Thank you very much Dan, and my apologies, I have just come from the airport. So if I trip over any of this, my apologies. But thank you very much Dan for the invitation this morning and thank you very much for also to the Centre for International Studies and Diplomacy for organising this event on such an important theme and having gathered such a very prestigious group of people to speak about it. I think it goes without saying, as you suggested Dan in your introduction, that we all regard the Middle East WMD free zone as an important part of our global efforts to enhance the non-proliferation regime and indeed our efforts to enhance disarmament more generally. And I think its worthwhile just putting our specific efforts towards securing that zone in that broader context, and its broader context of not only trying to strengthen the NPT regime but also of trying to bring, at long last, a comprehensive, just and sustainable peace to the Middle East.

First of all that context of non-proliferation: we face – I think as we all know – several challenges but also some real opportunities as we work towards the NPT review conference in 2010. Our vision, first of all, is a reinvigorated non-proliferation treaty emerging from that conference. A reinvigorated NPT which offers zero tolerance for proliferators. A zero tolerance that we must manifest in the days and months between now and 2010, in our efforts to challenge those who seek to challenge the treaty itself.

Just this last weekend my political director, Mark Lyall Grant, joined Javier Solana and others, in going to Tehran to offer the Iranian regime a comprehensive package, a positive package, which we believe could offer a way out of the current situation. Just next week, the IAEA plans a visit to Syria on 22<sup>nd</sup>-24<sup>th</sup> June. We join with the calls from Dr El Baradei, for the Syrian regime to show the IAEA full transparency in response to the concerns that have been raised. We call on it, and others in the region, to sign the additional protocol to give greater strength to the non-proliferation regime. That's the first, and in many ways, most 'sort of' note-worthy element of the NPT regime. But let's not forget the other two crucial strands of the NPT regime.

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Peaceful: the support for those who pursue nuclear energy for peaceful means and how important that strand has become as we struggle with the effects of climate change and as we struggle with the effects of \$140 a barrel for oil. We've had a whole series of proposals over the last year or so to increase that support for those who seek to pursue the path of peaceful nuclear energy. I think there are now 12 different proposals on the table addressing the issue of the nuclear fuel cycle. Among them are options for internationally run enrichment centres, fuel assurances and indeed the nuclear threat initiative, an IAEA administered stockpile of low-enriched uranium. The United States has already contributed the bulk of the funding to that proposal. Our own proposal is an enrichment bond, to provide a back up guarantee against interruptions in supply. Gordon Brown announced, just a couple of months ago, that we would convene an international conference later this year in London, to look at these series of proposals and how we can work to take these ideas forward. Thirteen countries in the Middle East have already announced an interest in nuclear energy. That shows the challenge that we face to provide the support to those countries as they take those efforts forward. We have already signed a memorandum of understanding with the United Arab Emirates, following their announcement of a new civil nuclear programme, alongside a commitment to forego enrichment and sign the additional protocol. Jordan has similarly outlined their intention to develop a civil nuclear programme with help from abroad and has already ratified the additional protocol. We look forward to working closely with these countries and others as they move forward to develop peaceful nuclear energy.

The third strand of the NPT is, of course, disarmament. As Margaret Beckett said last June, in her Carnegie speech, we need to revitalise that vision of a nuclear free world that lies at the heart of the NPT regime. And we need to set out the practical steps that can make that vision more than that, but actually a practical reality. And I think that all of the nuclear weapon states not only have a commitment to take forward that vision but also a real and urgent necessity to show the steps that we have taken. For our part, we have reduced our nuclear power arsenal by 75% since the end of the Cold War. We now hold less than 1% of the global inventory of nuclear weapons. The United States and Russia have reduced their warheads by 40,000 since the end of the Cold war. But we all recognise that more needs to be done. Part of that solution may be provided by the extension by the useful transparency and confidence building measures in the START framework should Russia and the United States agree to do so. But we also need urgent action on the comprehensive test ban treaty, and the fissile material cut off treaty. Those treaties bring practical measures to reduce the ability of states to acquire new weapons and to develop new ones. We're disappointed so far at the 'logged jam' in Geneva on our efforts to get those negotiations started

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on an FMCT. We have, on our own part, been trying to take forward work on what I call those practical steps to make the vision of a nuclear free world a reality. That includes participation and part funding of a study by the International Institute for Strategic Studies on the practical steps to eliminate nuclear weapons. We are also continuing work in parallel with the United Kingdom's Atomic Weapons Establishment, what I call the nuts and bolts of weapon disarmament. That will include the key stages of the verification process to identify ways to provide the confidence that dismantlement of weapons has indeed taken place. Those efforts must continue if we are to make that vision of a nuclear free world a reality.

And let me pause for a moment also on our efforts to secure a comprehensive, just and durable peace settlement in the Middle East. We have a three-prong approach. First of all support for a two state solution. Secondly, a commitment to work with all those committed to peace. And third, practical help to improve the daily lives of Palestinians living under occupation in the West Bank and Gaza. And I think we do see some grounds for cautious optimism despite all the difficulties and the hardship. First of all, the continued dialogue between Prime Minister Olmert and President Abbas the first clear political progress for almost seven years. Second, the intensified international effort since the Annapolis conference last November, including the Paris conference in December, which raised 7.7 billion dollars to support the Palestinian authority, including 243 million pounds pledged by the British government. Then the meetings just last month here in London between the quartet and key Arab governments to agree on a common approach to take forward the process of peace. Fourth, on the ground, the practical co-operation that we're now seeing between Israeli defence forces and the Palestinian Security forces in Jineen, with the support of the envoy of Tony Blair which could provide a model for an economically viable Palestinian state alongside a secure Israel. And fifth, the Palestinian investment conference, just last month in Bethlehem, co-sponsored by the United Kingdom, which successfully raised over 1 billion US dollars towards business projects in the occupied Palestinian territories, in an effort to create a sustainable Palestinian economy.

Those, ladies and gentlemen, are the contexts in which we want to take forward the work on the Middle East WMD zone. Our position on that zone is well known. We've always supported strongly universal membership of the NPT and we've repeatedly called upon those states that have not joined the NPT to do so as non-nuclear weapon states. Moreover, we fully support the creation of nuclear weapons free zones. We honestly believe them to be the best way for non-nuclear weapons states to obtain the internationally binding legal instruments on negative security

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assurances, which so many desire. For our own part, we have signed and ratified protocols in respect of three other nuclear weapon free zones, granting treaty based negative security assurances to over 100 countries across the globe. We supported the original Middle East resolution, at the 1995 NPT review and extension conference, and of course in the relevant UN Security council resolutions since then. We have consistently supported appropriate resolutions at the first committee of the UN General Assembly calling for such a zone and highlighting the risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East. And we've supported reference to the Middle East WMD free zone in UN Security Council resolutions, 1747 and 1803, on Iran's nuclear programme.

It's clear for us that this vision of a Middle East WMD free zone, like the wider vision of a world without nuclear weapons, is a vision that will take consistency, patience and understanding. Just like our own peace process on Northern Ireland, disarmament has to go hand in hand with building the confidence between the parties, that disarmament can be sustainable and secure. But I think what we've seen over the last year has encouraged us. Encouraged us because we think there's a growing recognition across the world, including in the stances taken by both presidential contenders in the US presidential campaign, of the challenges that we face. Of the proliferation risks and the opportunities provided by the nuclear energy renaissance - to strengthen the NTP and to strengthen the elements within the NTP, whether they be zero tolerance to proliferation, support for those pursuing the peaceful use of nuclear energy, or those seeking to give substance and vision to the idea of a world free of nuclear weapons. Working together between nations, with NGO's, with SOAS and others in the academic community, we can make this vision, including the vision of a Middle East free zone, a reality. But it will take time, it will take patience and it will take understanding of each other's views. Thank you very much indeed.

**Dan Plesch:**

*Simon has kindly agreed to take a couple of questions before he has to get off to other duties, so if there's one or two. We could take them quickly... Gentleman at the back:*

Question -

How exactly does Britain's upgrading of trident nuclear capability fit in with this vision of a nuclear free world or this concept of zero tolerance for proliferation?

**Simon Manley:**

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Response –

Thanks very much. I mean I think we made it clear with the decisions we took at the time of trident that we remain committed to the process of multilateral disarmament and to that effort, and I think you will have seen over the last year, since the trident decision, that we have pursued that effort as energetically as any other nuclear weapon state and so I feel pretty comfortable about where we're coming from.

Question – *inaudible*

Response –

Well I don't want to get in to the specifics of single nations but I think if you look at what we're doing for example with, as I mentioned just then, what we're trying to do with the United Arab Emirates there is a real willingness, on the part of nuclear weapons states like ourselves which have, we hope, a modest technological capability, to work with those countries that do want to pursue peaceful nuclear programmes to provide whatever assistance we can to make that vision a reality.

**Dan Plesch:**

Ok, thank you, I'm terribly sorry, we are terribly pressed for time during the course of the morning, and it's, I must say, a great privilege that the Ambassadors are prepared to take questions in a public setting. So thank you very much indeed, thank you.

[Applause]

Now it is my very great pleasure to ask to come to join me on the platform, His Excellency Wael Al-Assad, who is Director of Disarmament and Multilateral affairs for the League of Arab States.  
Your Excellency -

[Applause]

*HE Wael Al-Assad, League of Arab States*

Thank you. Good morning, Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen. I have been instructed by Dan that I have fifteen minutes to resolve the issue of non-proliferation in the Middle East and if I still have time the Arab's regular conflict in the process. So excuse me if I have tried to, in the morning to, get pieces from here and there to trying to focus on the important issues to maybe raise a few ideas that are worth discussing for all of us. Allow me at the outset to express my appreciation to the School of Oriental and African Studies at the University of London for inviting me to speak on this important issue and it is a privilege and an honour to interact with such a seasoned assembly of experts and diplomats.

Let me first start by quoting the final report of the Weapons of Mass Destruction commission, which was issued in 2006: "*So long as any state has such weapons, especially nuclear arms, others will want them.*" It would be wise for us to keep this in mind, as we speak of non-proliferation in the Middle East. The Middle East is one of the most turbulent regions of the world, obviously for everybody. At this moment we have four major conflicts; Iraq, Sudan, Somalia, and of course the Arab-Israeli conflict. Lebanon, which had survived the Israeli war last year, and has just come out from the brink of political chaos, is not completely out of the woods. The Iranian nuclear file is very controversial and might easily lead to military confrontation if things go the way they are going now. And lately we have been witnessing a new 'surprise' of allegations of covert nuclear activity, which reminds me personally very much of the build up of the file against Iraq. In addition to these conflicts all over the region, and they all have spill over effects in to neighbouring states. The Middle East also suffers a number of problems, such as border issues, water shortages, terrorism, energy security, and is confronted with massive social and economic problems and inequalities; we already have six states that are classified as least developed countries, in the region.

One fact is clearly evident from this very quick review of the situation in the Middle East, that the last thing that we need in this region is the presence of nuclear weapons – that would be a devastating recipe for instability and insecurity. Now for over half a century the Arab states have been confronted with a multifaceted security dilemma; on one level how can they maintain a balance of power in the fast changing political environment of the Middle East, on another level how can they honour their international commitments in the area of non-proliferation while others at the regional level are free to develop, and compile nuclear weapons and other non-conventional

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capabilities. On a third level, there is an increasing difficulty to states of the region to provide development and human security to the peoples of the region, as the resources are drained for armament. At the heart of this predicament is the Arab-Israeli conflict.

It is, from our point of view, the most influential factor, in the region's political, social, economic and military problems. In the 60's, as information on Israel's nuclear programme became public, the Arab states faced three alternatives to dealing with the Israeli nuclear problem. The first option was to accept and co-exist with the nuclear weapons in the region, needless to say, co-existence, with nuclear weapons in the hands of others was never a viable option for the region, or for any other region for that matter. As a result the Arab states, moved at the international fora to warn against the dangers of the Israeli nuclear policies and its ramification for regional peace. Therefore the second option, which was to develop nuclear weapons of their own and in order to counter balance the Israeli nuclear threat, became viable in the 1960's, to some of the Arab states at least. And I remember, President Nasser of Egypt at the time, declared when the 'demunory' actor became known, that if Israel can manufacture nuclear weapons then so will Egypt. This is basically the same position as other states, like the Soviet Union, Argentina, and Pakistan when they were faced with the nuclear capabilities of their adversaries; the US, Brazil and India. But that option was quickly discarded. The third option was regional elimination of nuclear weapons and it became the stronger and more dominant thrust of Arab policies since the 70's. This option took complete shape in the 1974 United Nations General Assembly resolution on the creation of a nuclear weapons free zone. The Arab states adopted that idea since then and developed it into an initiative that they have been marketing at the international level for the last three decades. And if you remember that resolution was first introduced by Iran and then adopted by Egypt and the rest of the Arab states.

The creation of a nuclear weapons free zone is a topic close to the hearts of the Arabs; they always think it's the solution. For in spite of the rhetoric support given to the idea, almost by every state, just to give lip service to the idea, we feel that we have become the only advocates and keepers of this idea at the international arena. Yet it is also a source of great frustration as we realise that 34 years have elapsed since the initiative was launched without taking one step forwards towards realising it. And as we heard in the previous presentation, we are asked for more patience and time, after 34 years of introducing the idea at the international level. We need to think of that.

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I will not bore you with the history of the idea since its inception, most of you know it well, but I would like to remind you of specific milestones along the way. In the 80's Israel joined the consensus on the General Assembly resolution but insisted at that time that any discussion of it must be in direct negotiations. That position shifted when direct negotiations became possible and the position keeps shifting in order to avoid any serious discussion of the issue. In 1991, the Security Council adopted resolution 687 on Iraq and the resolution now is fully implemented, except paragraph 14 which stated that it considers the measures taken in that resolution a step forward towards creating a weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. Between 1991 and 1995, the Arms Control and Regional Security working group, the 'ACRS', was established within the multilateral track of the peace process until it reached a deadlock. Although this, the 'ACRS', and from my point of view - is undervalued and there are some very good lessons learned in it, especially in the area of CBMs and CSBMs – yet one of the main reasons for its failure was Israel's refusal to put the nuclear file on the agenda.

In 1994, the Arab League established a governmental expert committee to elaborate a draft treaty to transform the Middle East in to a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. And that committee worked hard on devising a very complicated, never done before treaty that includes the three types of weapons. And it worked for 12 years, 13 years and it was suspended lately as a reaction to the inability to move ahead with the idea at the international level. But the work is done. In 1995, the NPT review and extension conference adopted the Middle East resolution, the infamous Middle East resolution, it was sponsored by the three depository states, and adopted by consensus, and it was part and parcel of the package deal for extending the NPT indefinitely. By the year 2000 all Arab states became party to the NPT and the 2000 review conference called up on Israel, the only state in the region that not has joined the treaty yet, to join as soon as possible. Now in 2007, after 33 years and over a hundred resolutions in different fora the nuclear weapons free zone was still in the pre-negotiation phase.

A report to the Arab League Summit in Riyadh, gave a summary of the regional nuclear dilemma facing us, and the initiative that we have been proposing for so long. The Summit at Riyadh expressed concern and disappointment, suspended the work of the expert committee on drafting the weapons of mass destruction free zone and called the Arab League to conduct an evaluation of Arab policies in this area – where did we go wrong? Why isn't the international community responding and implementing its resolutions? - And requested recommendations on possible alternatives of this situation because this, this is a matter of security to the Arab states. The

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frustration that the Arabs feel as a result of this total lack of momentum stems from the fact that the initiative would provide a way out of the current situation of nuclear proliferation, and if combined with the Arab League Peace Initiative, both together would provide security for the whole region, and for everybody in the region. Yet it has not been taken seriously. The Arab League called for, calls - this is the position of the Arab states when it comes to how do we handle non-proliferation – for the regional approach to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction instead of the state by state approach that is being used now, which is evidently selective and biased, and the regional approach would be through creating a zone free of nuclear weapons.

Israel is the only nuclear capable state in the region. It has been ranked fourth in terms of deployed nuclear weapons, after the US, Russia, and France, and preceding the UK and China. It has conventional and non-conventional arms capability in the Middle East and that unfortunately, we feel will trigger a new phase in the regional arms race, if it persists. The logical way out of this dilemma is to gradually lay the grounds for a nuclear weapons free zone. This will necessitate of course revision of the 'intermeshed' positions of everybody. Using fresh thinking, to create momentum we need to examine every possible avenue. Today all the Arab states are party to the NPT. Sixteen of them are party to the Chemical Weapons Convention. Fourteen are party to the Biological and Toxin Weapon Convention. Iran is party to the three conventions as far as I know. Israel, in stark comparison, is not party to any of these conventions, they refuse to join the NPT, unwilling to ratify the CWC, and have declined to join the BTWC.

Ladies and gentlemen, I am sorry to bore you with all this information but it's important to re-look at the issue. The non-proliferation regime, as we have heard, has been in a very serious crisis for the last few years. Part of the problem stems from the deviation and distortion in the international discourse on non-proliferation, and also from the attempts by certain groups and powers to reinterpret the NPT to serve their interests. So allow me very briefly to comment on some of the ideas that have been circulating and became part of the disarmament discourse regarding the Middle East. And maybe I'll be a little bit provocative, but we really need to look at these arguments. The first is this idea that the nuclear free zone cannot be pursued in isolation from achieving a peace settlement in the region. Yes, of course things are related. Everything is related when it comes to security in the Middle East But some are using this logic to say that Israel has the right to defend itself and in order for it to maintain its security Israel cannot give up its nuclear weapons, join the NPT or even join a nuclear weapons free zone except after settling

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the Arab-Israeli conflict and achieving permanent peace. Then they can start discussing it. This logic, to us at least, endorses the idea that nuclear weapons provide security to Israel. I put it to you that this is a very dangerous proposition. For if nuclear weapons provide security to one then it should provide security to the rest. To me, that amounts to an invitation to proliferate. Everybody wants security. I would also like to remind you, and remind everybody, that all the Arab states joined the NPT during the ongoing conflict with Israel and did not use the conflict as a pretext to refrain from joining the NPT or to develop nuclear weapons. Nuclear weapons do not provide security to Israel in this conflict and the creation of the zone will work, as a tremendous CSBM and assists in reaching peace.

The second issue is the response we hear when we question the double standards used in dealing with the Israeli nuclear programme. Some would immediately point out that Israel is not party to the NPT and hence has no obligations. While others who are members, have. I hope we will not hear such arguments in such a prestigious assembly, for what does this argument really mean? Is Israel, because it refuses to sign the NPT, free to develop nuclear weapons? While others are not because they chose to be party with the international community? Therefore, are we punishing those who joined and rewarding those who refused? I pose the question to those who feel comfortable with the legal argument that of joining the NPT, are you not advocating to others to withdraw from the treaty and then will be free to pursue nuclear weapons? This argument is very dangerous and counter productive.

The third and last issue I would like to speak of is the distortion in the multilateral discourse over non-proliferation. The deviation in this discourse has taken it away from the original principles under which states agreed to join the NPT. The present discourse focuses on preventing nuclear weapons from falling in to the hands of the most dangerous actors, be it rogue states, irresponsible governments or non-state actors. This logic claims that it is not the weapons that we should worry about, but who owns them. This is, from my point of view, a discriminatory approach. The regional proposition was that it was not acceptable for any state, regardless of its qualification, to obtain nuclear weapons. In addition there are no objective criterion for what constitutes a responsible state and an irresponsible state. And who is authorised to make such a classification? I'm glad to hear today, in the previous speech, that zero tolerance with proliferators but we need to remind each other that there are no good proliferators and bad proliferators, you want zero tolerance on proliferation there has to be really zero tolerance on everybody who is proliferating - there are no good proliferators and bad proliferators, all

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proliferators should not be tolerated. What the Middle East needs now is an international effort to adopt practical measures to lead the region towards serious negotiations on establishing a nuclear weapons free zone, as a step to establishing a weapons of mass destruction free zone. The three depositary states of the NPT – the US, the UK and Russia – have a special responsibility towards implementing the 1995 NPT conference resolution on the Middle East, beyond discussing it, beyond calling upon. They have a very special responsibility, because they were the ones who introduced it to the conference, they were the ones who pushed it, and they were the ones that put it on the table in order to extend the NPT indefinitely.

Lastly, all the states in the region have to start, under international supervision, serious negotiations on arms control, giving priority to nuclear disarmament. Maybe we need a more mature form of the “ACRES” again. We should collectively seek these goals, not as adversaries, but as partners in that region, and if Israel wants to be part of the Middle East it has to abide by the same rules. We should steer away from the zero sum game, which has been preventing the region from creating any co-operation security arrangement. And finally we should start doing that now, not later. And patience is not always a virtue. I thank you for your patience.

[Applause]

**Dan Plesch:**

*Again, His Excellency is prepared to take a couple of questions which we just about have time for.*

Question:

Ok, {I am} Mohammed Ali from “CASBAH” UK (“KASBAH”?) – I have two interrelated questions... - (*Can you make it just one please?*) – Ok! Well the question is this. If Arabic countries are interested in nuclear energy...{inaudible} - how would it be with Iran’s case – because here is a country subject to the IAEA inspections, working within the NPT’s frameworks and all that – still being isolated, being demised for this programme, and again over there it is not clear, it is not even allowed to develop that nuclear technology to extend that the NPT itself allows... How do the countries that you are representing view this case, if they are interested in developing nuclear energy and they do still want to work within the NPT, because of course there is a double standard, would it happen to the Arab countries as well or not, and what sort of provisions have you thought of in order to prevent that?

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**HE Wael Al-Assad:**

Response:

Thank you, that is very important, because this is part of the debate that has been going on within the NPT. What is being asked now, using Iran as a pretext, is to put controls on giving technology to non nuclear weapons state, to members of the NPT under conditions. One of these conditions is that now they are asking for the additional protocol, which is invasive and optional, to be mandatory and most of the developing countries are refusing that. The second thing is that the NSG – the Nuclear Suppliers Group – is, there is a role of monopoly in the technology that we’re trying to break. They are asking everybody now to refrain from the process of enrichment and there is nothing in the NPT now that stops states from enriching unless the aim is to have this monopoly. The pretext is that this is one step towards a military programme if countries decide to but if the NPT has loopholes we need to handle these loopholes, and it does have a lot of loopholes. The idea is not to restrict it from some people and give it to some people, to create three classes of states within that convention; we already have two – nuclear weapons, and non nuclear weapons. The third issue is that now they are fearing, some people are fearing, that due to these pressures on so many countries the idea of getting out of the NPT, using Article 10 of the NPT to withdraw, has become a serious one and now they are trying to lock these states in to the NPT by preventing them access to Article 10. That’s a dangerous proposition, because if you have a faulty agreement you don’t lock people in to it, you try to mend it and you try to mend it through proper, honest, transparent discourse on where are the problems for everybody and then you mend it, you don’t say this is it, and you keep working within this faulty system as much as we want you to be.

Question:

Thank you. {I am} Mark Fitzpatrick from the International Institute for Strategic Studies. Thank you very much, Ambassador, for the presentation. I fully support the objective and the focus on practical steps. One of the problems we haven’t been able to make any progress on all of these years has been a lack of verification of existing agreements and a lack of enforcement of the existing agreements. In the Middle East there have been repeated cases of countries that have pursued nuclear weapons programmes without being discovered in the process until late, and have violated NPT required safeguards agreements and this is why Israel, for example, often says well how could they accept an additional nuclear free weapons zone if existing agreements cannot be verified or enforced. And then we have the latest example of another country that appears to

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have been pursuing a nuclear reactor in violation of the safeguards agreement. How does the Arab League State address this verification and enforcement problem?

**HE Wael Al-Assad:**

Response:

Well thank you but let me first respond to the logic that Israel is not joining the NPT because of that while actually my logic would be if anybody had pursued nuclear weapons it would be because of the existing nuclear weapons to Israel, that's the driving factor and that has been stated in different independent studies. And it is not as repeated as we try; we can speak of a couple of cases, maybe yes. We have tried to work that in the expert committee of the Arab League, it worked for 13 years on each and every type of weapons and of course verification has been a major problem to us and one of things we did is we even tried to play what would be of interest to Israel to join as well- and that's beside the point- but yes it's been problematic. But the most successful of the verification system is the nuclear one. The real problem is in the biological and the chemical, and it solely flies on the basis of the goodwill of states but at least we do have an almost a very accurate mechanism for verification and if you, as a state, would deviate from it and attempt to do something, you will be detected, you will be caught and then hence action could be taken. The problem is then with the other two types of weapons. And so I do think we do, we already have in the nuclear area a very good mechanism for verification and the IAA is doing an excellent job regarding that apart from the attempts at politicising certain issues and then throwing it in the IAA and putting them in the effects of how to report on specific issue. It's not the technological side; it's the political ramifications of the issue. Thank you.

[Applause.]

**Dan Plesch:**

Thank you very much Your Excellency. Ladies and gentlemen, just a couple of updates on the programme; His Excellency, Dr Sami Khiyami, the Syrian Ambassador to the United Kingdom will be speaking after the break, as you discussed with my colleagues. I should also say, you may have noticed there was some concern and protest outside about the conditions in Iraq. I can inform you that His Excellency Dr Hussain Al-Shahristani has been having fairly extensive dialogue with a delegation from the group and will be with us opening the session after the coffee break. Those notes aside, it is now my very great honour and privilege to invite to the platform one of the people most in the public eye on an issue of the greatest international and public

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concern which once again is coming up in the media and international politics, the relationship between the international community and the Islamic Republic of Iran over the nuclear issue.

I am delighted that His Excellency, Dr Ali Asghar Soltanieh, has been able to find time in his incredibly packed schedule to come to London to be with us today to address this issue. I think there can be no greater affirmation for SOAS in its attempt to find dialogue in the world that he has managed to find time to be with us. So I hope you will join with me in welcoming him to the conference.

[Applause.]

*HE Dr Ali Asghar Soltanieh, Islamic Republic of Iran*

In the name of God, the most gracious, the most merciful {Arabic }

I want to first express my sincere appreciation for the invitation, especially the organisation that has been made giving this opportunity to talk about the issue of the Middle East and of course I'm sure the audience would be interested to also listen to some of the points regarding the nuclear issue. I'm well prepared to in fact answer the questions I hope that you will challenge me today. Technical, legal, political aspects of nuclear matters of Iran and I try to give the answers and responses on the base of facts and figures. And in fact, I am of the belief that we have the obligation that the people should know the facts, all dimensions and all aspects of every issue. We are talking about the Middle East; Iran's issue is also in the region. Therefore I encourage you, as much as the time permits us, to ask us questions, I try to have a very brief presentation and then hopefully we have chance for the questions and answers.

Well I wonder if there is, among us, any physician or not? Because we have a patient – the Middle East – and we have first to have a diagnosis. And therefore I have learnt from some physicians that they make some questions before they give a prescription. The first question is, how long the patient is sick? Sixty years. How healthy was it prior the first evidence of disease appeared? Well dare I say it's very simple – it was the healthiest region with a thousand years of peaceful co-existence of three divine religions. Next question – did any outsider bring a disease?

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Yes. Next questions – were there natural reactions by the internal organs of the body? Yes. Any attempts were made for possible treatment by local physicians? Yes. The countries tried to solve their problems. And then, were they successful? No. Why? The rejection of the patient to take any medicine and the interference of strangers offering medicine with dangerous side effects.

Is there any hope for a cure? Well, I'm an optimist. Still, yes. What to do now? Force the patient to take the medicine, offered by honest, eminent local physicians and safeguard the hospital from possible threat and plot of the enemies of the patient, especially those who spread out the epidemic disease years ago to come to the vicinity of the hospital. Then, the last question, what kind of medication is possible? Be patient, and listen carefully and take careful notes to my presentation.

Minimal requirements now of the establishment of the Middle East free zone. Well, lets see now, I'm trying to give some prescription, bearing in mind those facts. What do you have to know that one has to take some elements into consideration as well. First is a necessity – how crucial is the establishment of the weapons of mass destruction free zone for the stability, establishment of peace and security in the region and, of course, the world at large. The second, successful examples, is there any region in which the WMD free zone has successfully been established – if so where, when how long it took for the countries concerned to come to a conclusion of a need, how long did the negotiation take, and did any outside countries triggered such initiatives, were the outsiders involved during the negotiations of the countries concerned?

Then the next question – critical review of the historical events including regional and international events and 'short comes'. It is a necessity, in order to have a realistic approach and to have feasible recommendations. The role of treaties also we have to consider – and there are three main treaties; NPT, CWC and BTWC. For your information, there was no introduction, and I forgot to bring my resume to distribute but I have for the last thirty years I have been involved in the disarmament and non-proliferation of three WMD's. I was three years the Secretary/Security on National Authority for Chemical Weapon Convention, three years as an Ambassador and Chief Negotiator for protocol of the Biological Weapon Convention in Geneva and for the last thirty years have been working on nuclear matters. Therefore, to some extent, I can perhaps help if there are any questions on that, on those issues.

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So lets see, next one – the role of the relevant organisations? Of course, IAEA, OPCW, We don't have any organisation for the Biological Weapons Convention because almost 10 years of negotiations collapsed in Geneva. For the last three years I sat there and United States has to be blamed for it, because the whole world was determined to have the protocol and to establish organisation for the Biological Weapons Convention and it didn't work and it is in dormant now situation.

Now, note of course that there are some examples of WMD free zones, mostly nuclear weapon free zones so and so forth. Therefore there are examples. That is part of the reason that I said that I'm not that pessimist. Well, short class on the status quo with the well-known proliferation treaties, we have to now have a short class on what is the situation in the Middle East, the Islamic Republic of Iran has ratified NPT, CWC, BWC, BTWC and Geneva protocol of 1925. Iraq has ratified the NPT, CWC, BTWC, and Geneva protocol, but with reservations of course. Saudi Arabia has ratified the NPT, CWC, and BTW Geneva protocol. Jordan has ratified also. Syria Republic has ratified the NPT, signed the BTWC and ratified the Geneva protocol but with reservations and of course we know the reason that they have not done for CWC because they are linking to NPT which I see some merits for it. And also Egypt has ratified the NPT and Geneva protocol. Israel has not ratified the NPT, CWC, BTWC and has ratified the Geneva protocol but with reservation – it means that it has reserved that it will use biological weapons.

Well, security concern of the countries in the ME (of course I'm trying to skip and perhaps give copies of it, if the conference service would help I would make a copy of this and it could be available, therefore I will try to skip it if you don't mind). There are security concerns about this, you know very well, but I just don't want to take your time. And the Islamic Republic of Iran, having been the only victim of the use of chemical weapons in recent history, is highly motivated to pursue the realisation of this lofty goal of a world free from weapons of mass destruction. Since the end of the war imposed on Iran by the regime of Saddam Hussein, tens of thousands of Iranians continue to suffer and perish as a result of chemical weapons whose component came from the certain countries permanently seated on the United Nations Security Council. This is a bitter reality of the situation. As I said, I was in charge of the Chemical Weapons Convention implementation in Iran, and I had many guests from OPCW of Vienna, I brought them to Iran and they visited even some hospitals and in one case Director General of OPCW was witnessing the last moment of a man who was going to die from the problems of the chemical weapons – lung disease, long time from the lung. And these are many things and this is a disastrous situation, I

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give you the figures – over a hundred thousand have been affected by chemical weapons, roughly about 34,000 still are under treatment. And this country, we are here, and many others were supporting Saddam at that time, and this is a shameful silence from the United Nations Security Council that didn't even pass a resolution condemning the chemical weapons. This is part of a dark history of the United Nations, and the United Nations Security Council. Nobody could forget that.

Well, Israeli Ministers acknowledged of course on level the position of nuclear weapons but his regime, in his interview with German TV channel, 11<sup>th</sup> December 2006, revealed the real nature of the said regime clandestine nuclear activities, which poses a serious and continuing threat to international, as well as the regional, security. Well, it is worse. After a strong condemnation by almost all participants of the general conference of the IAEA in 2007, the representative of Israel rejected their statement by his Prime Minister. No wonders, since such contradictory statements are consistent with the policy of hypocrisy and deception of the regime since its unlawful establishment. However, in order to prove such assertions, for few who might need further clarification, I propose myself, as I proposed at the general conference to the Director General of the IAEA to send a team of inspectors to verify the claim and to report there upon to the member states and to the international community as a large. Who is telling the truth? The Prime Minister or his representative to the IAEA? Well military attacks.

I have requested you to be patient because I am going to go to nuclear issues of Iran too but very simply I think this is a very important problem in the region of the Middle East. A taboo is broken; for the first time in the history, by Israel, by attacking a nuclear installation. And of course, you know that there was condemnation in the United Nations and as well of course the IAEA, at the general conference in 1982 something interesting happened. At that conference, where I was present, in 1982, America threatened; the Arab countries were preparing a resolution and that if this resolution against Israel will be adopted, condemning Israeli military attack, US will withdraw its membership from IAEA, therefore 25% of the budget will drop and IAEA will collapse. I talked to my authorities at that time, years back, they agreed, and we officially announced in return that if US would withdraw Iran will pay the contribution, 25% contribution of the US, for the whole life of that IAEA. And I took this announcement and written commitment to the Arab countries there, bearing in mind that Saddam had attacked Iraq, but as a matter of principle Iran supported the resolution for condemning Israel against attacking Iraqis, which were the enemy right there and killing our people, because as a matter of principle. And

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taking this paper to the meeting with Arab brothers, and friends, they didn't change the resolution because there was some possibility of diluting the resolution or even not tabling it. They tabled it, it was passed. And Israel, who was in fact denied the privilege and right for over a decade. But what happened to the United States? The United States delegation left the conference hall after the adoption of the resolution but they didn't leave the IAEA, they are still in the IAEA, therefore that was a bluff. That is why I made the risk for accepting the payment of 25% of the IAEA budget, that was it and I'm happy. Otherwise I have to give this from my pocket maybe, every year, 200 million dollars or so. [Laughter]

Well immediately after the US remained I said just as I have explained to you, now there have been some positive developments after that. I was continuing this issue of course with IAEA, then in 1990, after the NPT conference in Geneva I flew back to Vienna, of course I was back in Iran as the Director of Nuclear Research Centre, but I participated at IAEA general conference and NPT. And I was entrusted by my government to work on a resolution condemning any military attack. And I am proud to say that. Resolution 533 was proposed by Iran, A-Z, and it was adopted by general conference of IAEA. In this resolution, any attack, or any threat of attack, against any nuclear installation, during operation or even during construction, constitute the violation of the United Nations Charter, the statute of the IAEA and international law. How many of you are aware of this resolution? Therefore the threats of the Israelis - (yes Rebecca knows, she is following these developments) – you see the point is that how many times has Israel threatened to attack nuclear installations? According to this resolution there is another paragraph that immediately United Nations Security Council is expected to do {take} action. But there is, permit me to say, a shameful silence. Nothing you are aware of is development and this is very unfortunate. This is a resolution passed by the general conference of IAEA. The history of attempts are of course there here, you know as it was said by my distinguished friend Ambassador, regarding this nuclear weapons free zone, that Iran proposed first in 1974 and there was a continuation of this matter unfortunately without any success. I just skipped these things.

How much do we pay attention to the fact that the non-allied movement, which is 118 countries, have continuously deplored the Israelis rejection of international laws and not facilitating, or blocking in fact, the realisation of a Middle East free zone. This makes part of the statement of the 14<sup>th</sup> summit of non-allied movement, the summit – the Head of States of 118 countries, regarding the Israelis and the concerns that they have expressed. You can just read it later on. These are important documents. And of course in Geneva last meetings that I was over there.

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Ok, now, I'm sure that this is the favourite topic of some people – the nuclear issue of Iran, that is why I also have to give a short summary of that. Some facts. We have to have many facts. Of course, I'm trying to... I have shrunk in fact twenty slides to a shorter number of them, not to take your time... But these are very important for your judgement. Neither in IAEA statute or NPT safeguards, even in additional protocol, enrichment and reprocessing are prohibited or restricted. Any country even can go to 90% enrichment or more, no limitations, nothing. Even there is no limit for, of course, enrichment level. Iran's signed the additional protocol and stated the implementation two and a half years, 2003. This is important. For two and a half years, we tried it. It didn't work. The issue is in New York now. There is a confidence deficit. We don't trust the others, who have forced us to do it, but they had in fact in mind cessation of nuclear activities, but they brought the issue of suspension. Here Iran accepted also the Merrifield {?} code. This is important I think because continuously here from the mass media, particularly the Western media, Iran's 18 years of concealment. I always categorically reject and I challenge for a legal discussion. We, before 2003, we had not signed these Merrifield codes, of 3.1 of 1992. What does that mean? We were only obliged with the NPT comprehensive safeguards, M Sec 153, it means Iran was only obliged to inform about nuclear facilities only 180 days before nuclear material goes in. Therefore, we were not obliged to inform about Natanz enrichment facility, or uranium conversion in Isfahan, or even Bushehr nuclear power plant or any nuclear facilities in Iran unless, before 180 days nuclear material is going to go.

But of course this Merrifield code {?} which Iran had not yet, by 2003, signed it, the countries who have signed it will have obligation to inform from the beginning of the stage of construction. Therefore Iran did not have any violation of its obligations. Even for Natanz. That is why when I was accompanying the Director General to Natanz, as an eminent, international legal expert, he didn't raise that you have violated and I was accompanying him to President Khatami after that. He never raised and never raised non-compliance. This phrase and notion of non-compliance is very crucial. Because the non-compliance according to the Statute, Article 2 of C, says that it should be recognised by inspectors and then reported to Director General and thereupon to the Board of Governors. This has not been applied to Iran. Never ever the inspectors, or the Director General, have used this notion of non-compliance. But because of political motivations some few countries, Western countries, use this notion and send this issue or convey this issue to New York, and that is the reason I strongly challenge whoever says that there is a legality for this

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resolution. Neither the last Board of Governor resolution, nor the resolutions of the United Nations Security Council, do not have any legal basis.

Do you want to know a couple more reasons, very simple? Read the Statute of IAEA and comprehensive safeguards. The only other case that the issue should be referred to New York is if there is evidence of diversion of nuclear material or activities for military purposes. Never ever can you see in the reports of the Director General any of these notions, in contrary; the Director General has continuously informed that there is no evidence of diversion. There is another clause, a legal clause, that if agency informs that it is unable to continue its verification, like in the case of North Korea, when a country withdraws from the NPT, stops the inspections then it is reported to the United Security Council. In the case of Iran, continuously the Director General says, it is able to continue its verifications. Very simple, this is the reason. What is the last reason that I totally, categorically reject United Nations Security Council resolution? It is not a slogan; it is based on realities and facts. The last one is interesting for you to know. Europeans and Americans, when they give their resolutions in the Board of Governors, in all resolutions of Board of Governors, including the last one which conveyed the issue to New York, please read in the website of IAEA, there is a clause which says suspension is voluntary, non legally-binding and confidence building. If something is non legally-binding, and I stop it then why am I penalised to send this issue to New York? Because of these four reasons, there is no justification. There is another one added to it, please read the last report of the DG and the other reports. It says there is no evidence of reprocessing activities, means separation of plutonium, in Iran, reprocessing. But none of those who proposed this resolution in New York perhaps knew anything about physics because they have requested Iran to suspend reprocessing also - enrichment and reprocessing. We don't have any reprocessing to suspend, but we have enrichment and we will not suspend of course.

Anyway, after all these things there was one important issue which was other standing issues, which you remember, all of you were following, which was beyond even additional protocol. That is an important issue. Those six issues which were finally, we agreed, in this document, which is **War Plan by IAEA in August 2007**, it was not our obligation under NPT comprehensive safeguards. I insist on it. Because all those six issues, the issues which we heard, the questions which were asked to us, they were beyond comprehensive safeguards and even DG agreed and confirmed that even some of them were beyond additional protocol. But Iran, as a good gesture, ignoring the fact that the issue is New York, agreed with this text, in order to settle on all these

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outstanding issues. During that discussion, let me give you these important outstanding issues are safeguard related issues – here, ‘plutonium experiment’, P1 and P2 centrifuge types, source of contamination, uranium metal, polonium 2-10, and Gachine mine. I want you to also know that during the discussion in Tehran, we had the Head of Legal Department, Policy making, and Safeguard department of IAEA because of all aspects to be concluded in this **War Plan**, and they all agreed that these are only exhausted lists of outstanding issues of IAEA. Why do I insist on that? They accepted that the ... studies of American **Lapta {?}** does not have the same category, it is not categorised as outstanding issues, that is why look at their website this was, as other matters, **Roman tree ... studies**, only these six issues were outstanding issues.

Now, if you go back, and though I don’t agree of course, and there is no legal basis for the United Nations Security Council resolution, but the United Nations Security Council resolution, they asked Iran to suspend, because the reason was there were some outstanding issues, you remember? If you read it carefully. Now by resolving of these outstanding issues, as the Director General has reported, there is no merit, technical and legal merits, for suspension, first for the United Nations Security Council resolution, even if you wanted to accept the resolutions, but now those resolutions have lost their merits by resolving those issues as reported by Director General. Here of course these are important paragraphs regarding this one, I think this is important to know this, that no agency has reported that all issues are resolved. I don’t want to take your time, but you know that all these six issues are resolved. Here you see, they all they said that Iran’s statements are consistent.

What does that mean? 18 years, we were accused of 18 years of concealment, now Director General has reported that all the issues are consistent, it means Iran’s assertion is as consistent with the IAEA findings. Iran is victim of negligence and ignorance. Unfortunately they do not lead the public to know, that is the responsibility of intellectuals and scholars, parliamentarians to let the people of the world know about these facts.

Ok, let me go to the next one. Here again, read these things. Consistent, everything is consistent. Therefore those allegations, for over five years, were not correct. Now, regarding the **Alegis... {?}** **study**, I think it is interesting first it is not categorised as an outstanding issue. Next point is that Iran, this is the text in the **War Plan**, as a good will and co-operation with IAEA, {...?} Receiving all documents, it means there was an obligation by the IAEA to deliver the documents of laptop to us, and we study and we just inform. There was no... Here - The agency was not able to

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deliver the documents as reported by the Director General (read the last report). It was not possible because the Americans would not permit the agency. Of course, this is damaging the authority and credibility of the agency. They have given some laptops, and the material, and no authority for the agency to deliver to Iran. Here, as reiterated it cancels of course, allegiance is politically motivated. According to the **War Plan** the agency was obliged to deliver and could not, and according to the **War Plan** allegiance {?} study was not categorised, as I said. All these issues, as I said, are resolved. And here is the latest situation, as you know that...

Ok let me just conclude it.

I just have to inform you that we have given over 200 pages clarification and confidential documents to inspectors to prove that whatever it has... (Look at this, this was my last slide. I think it's interesting for you. Because everything is self-explanatory...)

Iran is trying to have this atomic energy for peace, peaceful atomic energy plan for the whole world, it's a puzzle, but the Americans do not let us to finish this puzzle for the whole world. You see that is exactly what's happening. For five years, we have tried, anytime at the eve of each Board of Governors, we are trying to bring the clarification and the DG is reporting everything is clear and the Americans bring another allegation. For your information, I have given, to all the representatives in Vienna, those documents that we gave confidential to inspectors, over 30 pages of them. I'm afraid I am not allowed to distribute here but I can just give you some flavours. In those documents we have explained the reasons that these materials are forged. Before that, there is a back run for it. For the last five years, because of these American continuous allegations, there have been 27 allegations visiting military sites of Iran (and we cannot, of course, elaborate more internally, because of course many of the people are parliamentary and will be angry of the government why they have permitted so many times to the military sites, after all this is national security). 247 samples have been taken from the military sites, and all have proven no indication of nuclear material.

Therefore the allegations have all been proved, as the DG reported, all baseless. Now the Americans last allegation was about a study, not about a site, that they said they have found a laptop - somebody in Iran, some group of people, wanted to make a design of nuclear weapon. They are talking about green salt, which is UFOR, and missiles and high explosives. Please, judge for yourself. After eight intensive discussions in Tehran with the inspectors, inspectors could not

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deliver to us but they brought and presented the slides, the documents that they had received on the laptop from the United States mission.

Can you believe that in none of the communication and documents that were presented by the IAA there are not even seals or stamp of confidential, or 'Highly Confidential' or 'Top Secret' on these documents that the Americans are accusing Iran to have Manhattan nuclear weapon project. None of them. They have shown us communication between Minister of Defence or other departments but none of them have this seal. And more important, as Director General also said in his report, the authenticity. We have never had an agency that does not/ has not received any genuine, original paper from the United States. And in many of these documents there are many shortcomings, but I just do not want to take up your time here just now.

To conclude, we have given all information to say that these allegations are baseless. Not in a one word, in over a hundred hours with inspectors including officials, including high known members in Tehran and I was fully responsible for it. And we have tried to fully co-operate with the IAEA.

And I think this is best to conclude in one sentence, I'm sorry the time is over. Iran is fully committed to its international obligation under the NPT and comprehensive safeguard. For two and a half years, we voluntarily applied additional protocol, and we suspended. We suspended in order to give the chance to the IAEA in order to prove that the contamination in Natanz was from outside of Iran, not inside of Iran. This is important, that was the trigger of the whole crisis! The European Union, General or EU3 in particular, promised that this suspension would be short time, as soon as the agency confirmed that this contamination is not from Iran's enrichment, this issue would be removed from the agenda of the Board of Governors. But they didn't keep their promise. It was 2004 when El Baradei informed to the whole world that the source of contamination is from outside of Iran not as a result of enrichment prior to 2003. But unfortunately still it is on the Board of Governors.

What is the position of Iran? In spite of the problem and the lack of legality that we can see for the United Security Council resolution, we have continued our co-operation with IAEA. We have neither suspended our enrichment nor we have suspended our co-operation with IAEA. That is exactly why the American administration is so upset, because they expected Iran to withdraw from the NPT and stop the inspectors to have an excuse for further pressure or even military action. We have disappointed them but we have kept our promise to the international community that we are committed. Thank you very much for your attention.

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[Applause.]

**Dan Plesch:**

*We are way over time, but we can take one or two questions and then we must go to our break, otherwise we will sit here all the way to 1 o'clock and without any break at all. So if there are one or two questions we can take them before we go to break. Briefly please.*

Question:

Paul Ingram from BASIC. Ambassador, when you are dealing with relatively paranoid and depressive people in Israel why is it that your President seems to stoke up the problems by talking about... taking Israel off the map, and refusing to clarify those statements when distorted by the Western media?

**HE Dr Ali Asghar Soltanieh:**

Response:

Well I have already been in fact facing this question. Of course it is out of the context of our discussion on nuclear matters, but since it is regarding the Middle East I perhaps have, to some extent, touched upon it when I was playing the role of physician, you noticed that? And the issue is very simple. The problem is the mentality. You have to recognise this matter, very clearly. The answer is very clear. After the victory of the Islamic Revolution of Iran, more than before, of course Iranians with a thousand years of civilization always have been committed to some principles, including being against genocide, discrimination, aggression, invasion, apartheid, Zionism - these are all mentalities which we cannot accept that. That is the reason, please those who are historians, look once again at the notes; is it not strange, that after the revolution, the first enemy that had influenced Iran for the last fifty years after the coup was the United States. But we didn't stop diplomatic relations after the revolution with the United States. But we immediately stopped our relations with the Zionist regime in Israel and also the apartheid regime in South Africa. What was the reason? Because of these mentalities. As soon as apartheid mentality is removed, right now, we have the best relation with the people there and the government. The issue is the mentality, and the school of thinking that we have a problem. In order to prove what I have said, and I think you can get the message, my Supreme leader announced to the whole world, over four years ago, but I'm sure that none of you in the Western countries have seen in the Western media what he said. He said, if the people there - Jews, Muslims, Christians, which

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are all the followers of divine religion - come together and follow a democratic referendum, we will support, because we are for the peace and stability of that region. And that is what, it has been confirmed by our President in many channels including 24 France channel, but it was not broadcast that much outside, but I saw it inside myself. This has been the case. Therefore the Supreme Leader, which is the highest authority and also the President have all said, if there is a referendum, a democratic referendum and the people there chose their own way, we will support it. That is the answer to your question. Please.

**Dan Plesch:**

Ok I think we must go to the break but I'm sure His Excellency will take some discussions informally. So I would like you to join with me in thanking His Excellency once again for a most engaging presentation.

[Applause]

Please could you be back by half past, if at all possible, just take a quick coffee, and then come back because we have an excellent further series of speakers, beginning of course with the Minister of Oil from Iraq.

**COFFEE BREAK**

I hope you managed to get some kind of a hot liquid down your throats. I doubt we needed much refreshment after the stimulation of the first set of our presentations and I think we will continue at the same high tempo with our next speaker. Just to run through the order of business between and now until lunch. In a moment we will hear from His Excellency Dr Hussain Al-Shahristani from Iraq, he will be followed by Dr Sami Khiyami, Ambassador of Syria to the Court of St James, Dr Wolfgang Rudischhauser, from the European Union and last but by no means least our very old friend Mr Sameh Aboul-Enein, Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of the Arab Republic of Egypt from the Egyptian Embassy here in London and he's a great expert on these matters. We then have a short final panel, featuring Sara Eriksen from the Norwegian Defence Institute and Professor Paolo Cotta-Ramusino from Pugwash. So without more ado I would ask you to join with me in welcoming to the conference His Excellency Dr Hussain Al-Shahristani, Minister of Oil from the State of Iraq a man who has a very considerable knowledge of the nuclear portfolio, originally a nuclear scientist and imprisoned for his pains for failing to co-operate with the prior

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regime, and an old friend of Pugwash. So I would like you now to join with me in welcoming him to the podium.

[Applause]

*HE Dr Hussain Al-Shahristani, State of Iraq*

I should start by thanking Pugwash UK and SOAS and Dan for this wonderful gathering. And it's a privilege to speak to such a distinguished audience on weapons of mass destruction and the role as a national security shields in the context of the Middle East. I had to face this question almost thirty years ago, in December 1979 when I was Chief Scientific Advisor to the Iraqi Atomic Energy Commission. I was asked to work on the development of nuclear weapons and when I declined I was arrested, tortured and imprisoned. The Head of the National security visited me one night, I remember, and forcefully told me that it was a man's duty to serve his country and who doesn't want to do so does not deserve to be alive. I was paralysed of torture but I told him, I agree that it was a man's duty but I had a different understanding what is a service to my country. I was then taken in to solitary confinement where I was kept for ten years. Then, and now, is that weapons of mass destruction do not provide any country with unchallenged security. On the contrary, these weapons set off an arms race that not only makes the country more secure but also endanger the world peace and security.

Recognising this threat, the UN Security Council passed its resolution 3263 in 1974 calling for a nuclear weapons free zone in the Middle East. And ever since then the Council has passed a resolution every year calling or reaffirming its resolution on this issue. These resolutions called on all parties to consider taking practical and urgent steps to establish a nuclear weapons free zone in the Middle East and pending and during the establishment of such a zone to declare solemnly that they will refrain from producing, acquiring or in any other way processing nuclear weapons and refrain from permitting the stationing of nuclear weapons on their territory by any third party. The resolutions also called on all countries in the region to place all their nuclear facilities and their international atomic energy agency safeguards to declare their support for the establishment of the zone. The establishment of nuclear weapons free zone in the Middle East and

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the elimination of all other weapons of mass destruction from the region would greatly enhance international peace and security and would be a corner stone in confidence building and trust amongst the nations of the region to be able to resolve such long standing, long pending issues as the Palestinian question. All countries in the Middle East, except Israel, are signatories to the NPT. The international community demands, and rightly so of all Arab countries, and Iran, to abandon an intention to develop military nuclear capacity, while leaving Israel in possession of a huge arsenal of nuclear weapons and missiles. In Iraq, our new constitution, which I had the honour to participate in drafting, forbids in Article 9 the development, production and use of weapons of mass destruction. The only country in the region in possession of nuclear weapons pursues a policy of opacity to keep its nuclear capability out of public eye. Their chanel for this posture has been that opacity is the best way to motivate restraint on the Arab side and Iran. But the results have not been very convincing. Five of Israel's neighbours have at some time strived, or are striving, to create a nuclear counter-deterrent or have developed chemical or biological weapons. In other words opacity has not cause five of Israel's neighbours to exercise restraint or prevented them from developing weapons of mass destruction. Thus Israel's nuclear policy has not provided it with more secure environment, and calls for reconsideration of this policy.

It's time to look at other policy options. As a starting point, and to create a secure environment, Iran and Israel should both engage in serious discussions with IAEA, which would lead to public declarations of their nuclear capability, and allow full inspection of their nuclear facilities by IAEA. This will pave the way to more serious discussions with the participation of the Arab countries and Turkey on the establishment of weapons of mass destruction free zone in the region of the Middle East. Among the transitional measures in building confidence and trust among the countries in the region, they may seek commitment from the nuclear arms states that the region will be not threatened or attacked by nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destruction. To facilitate meaningful engagement, it is important to understand how various countries in the Middle East perceive their national security and the role their nuclear capability plays in enhancing that security. Nuclear weapons have different symbolic meanings for different actors. For Israel, they are the ultimate guarantor of national survival. The Arab countries see Israel's conventional military power as greater than their combined capacity even without Israel's nuclear weapons. They do not see Israel's nuclear weapons as a defensive precaution, under which Israel can explore possibilities for peace; instead they see it as an offensive instrument, which impedes Israel's willingness to return to its internationally recognised borders of 1967 which the Arab countries believe is the corner stone for any permanent peaceful settlement of the Palestinian

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problem. Thus these two opposite perceptions make it impossible to engage in a meaningful discussion to establish a nuclear weapons free zone.

To do so all actors must be satisfied that it is in the interest of their national security, to eliminate all nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction from the region. Mutual understanding must be reached to create conditions under which all nations are satisfied that nuclear weapons will not enhance their national security. This understanding and the measures of confidence building, requires some degree of transparency of the military and the military industrial sectors. The opaque policy creates more confusion and mistrust and others will always assume worst-case scenario and react accordingly. To assure Israel of its security, if it agrees to withdraw to its internationally recognised borders, it is important that all weapons of mass destruction be included in the discussions. And the aim should be the establishment of a weapons of mass destruction free zone in the Middle East. The Arab countries have pledged that they will sign the Chemical Weapons Convention in response to Israel's accession to the NPT. Security dialogue amongst competing nations should start right away to examine if weapons of mass destruction free zone in the region would enhance or undermine their security. Weapons of mass destruction are highly related to the feeling of insecurity and unless the causes of these perceptions and feelings of insecurity are adequately addressed with a degree of confidence building measures nations may continue to feel that their only protection and defence is possession of weapons of mass destruction.

In the Middle East, presently the secure environment is challenged by many negative factors such as, impasse of Palestinian peace process, global terrorism, growing instability in the region, and the threat of weapons of mass destruction. In order to deal with such a situation, which represents a challenge for both the Middle Eastern countries and the international community, several strategies have been put forth by different proponents. The proposed options range from strictly regional security architecture to a broader vision connecting security to a process of general social and political reform in the Middle East. However, in the current environment it would appear very difficult to achieve simultaneously both human rights and democratisation and the solution of regional security issues. I believe a more realistically achievable task is to aim for regional stability by agreeing on a multinational regional security arrangement. Through direct negotiations by countries in the Middle East including Israel, Iran and Turkey. With participation of UN, EU, US, Russia and China as observers and guarantors. Without true regional stability, not imposed by a superpower but positively involving all regional actors neither permanent

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regional security nor the setting in motion of all those complex social, political and cultural trends required for a real reform of Middle Eastern countries are likely.

Another problem, which should be resolved, is to find a satisfactory solution to the needs of the countries in the region for nuclear fuel, for their power reactors and other peaceful applications. This is particularly important for Iran, given the long history of economic boycotts and political isolation. One way to ease concern for independent nuclear fuel supply, for peaceful nuclear reactors, is ‘multi-nationalising’ the front and back ends of nuclear fuel cycles, for those states in the region with nuclear capability. At the same time, and during this transitional confidence building stage, the international community can support the countries of the Middle East in pursuing peaceful application of nuclear science and technology. This peaceful application would enhance social economic developments in the region by providing significant benefits in key areas, such as medical diagnosis and treatment, nutrition, soil fertility, irrigation, plant breeding, animal protection and health, insect and pest control and food preservation and sterilisation. But more importantly it would convince the people of these countries that a nuclear weapons free zone is not a pretext to deprive them of the benefits of modern technological advancements. Such a regional security arrangement could provide a guaranteed supply of nuclear fuel and a peaceful development of a nuclear science and technology. If successfully implemented, would create confidence and trust, and the countries can then proceed with serious negotiations to remove all the nuclear weapons and facilities, as well as other all forms of weapons of mass destruction and their production facilities, from their countries and thus pave the way to the establishment of a weapons of mass destruction free zone in the Middle East. Thank you.

[Applause.]

**Dan Plesch:**

I’m terribly sorry we have got so far behind that we are not going to be able to take questions in this section of the conference. The speakers will I think mostly will be very happy to meet with people informally and have discussions at the end of the session. So its now my very great honour and privilege to invite to address the conference His Excellency Dr Sami Khiyami, Ambassador of Syria to the Court of St James

[Applause.]

*HE Dr Sami Khiyami, Syrian Arab Republic*

I would like to start by thanking SOAS and Dr. Plesch, Director of CISD, to give me the opportunity to speak to this prestigious audience and distinguished audience. When I received the invitation I discovered that I had to act as WMD specialist and being almost totally ignorant about the matter I asked my International Organisations Councillor to write these few words for me. Please bear with me, and excuse me, if I make a few mistakes in acronyms or numbers, what is important to me is to express Syria's views. Since 8 years now we have become a superpower. Apparently, Mr Bush wakes up four times at night and screams "SYRIA!" [Laughter] And so we feel really privileged. Even more privileged is that I have also heard that he knows now how to spell Syria [laughter and applause] which is an even greater privilege.

The Middle East for over half a century has been confronted with an irresolvable dilemma. One of the major security concerns is the threat posed by the existence of Israeli nuclear weapons in the region. This was addressed at the 1995 NPT review and extension conference; Decision 2 Paragraph 6, as follows '*The development of nuclear weapons free zones, especially in the regions of tensions such as the Middle East should be encouraged as a matter of priority.*'

The idea of creating a nuclear free zone in the Middle East is not a new one. Similar regions like Latin America, the Caribbean, the South Pacific and Africa are proceeding with the same idea. This idea has received overwhelming national, regional and global support. Establishing a Middle East nuclear weapon free zone is equivalent to a decision to extend the NPT indefinitely and any measures taken towards the establishment of this zone will help reduce tensions in the region and strengthen the universality of NPT. In the Middle East region all states, except Israel, have acceded to the NPT. Israel's nuclear activities have not been declared or subjected to any inspection. The issue of Israel nuclear capabilities has remained a main item on the agenda of the general conference of IAEA for many years. The general conference issued a number of resolutions, which called upon Israel to comply without delay with the United Nations Security Council resolution 487 of 1981 and place its nuclear facilities under the safeguards regime of the IAEA.

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Israel seems convinced it should increase its nuclear arms production in accordance with its own understanding of the security concept. This concept stands on two bases. Nuclear deterrents must be maintained as an ultimate national insurance policy in light of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Probably the whole Iranian issue is just for Israel to be capable to increase their number of nuclear heads it has in its arsenals. Reinforcement of the alliance of the West as the only alleged democracy in the region. Apparently Israel is supposed to stay an outpost of Western culture; if ME culture means an appetite for killing and occupying others lands then we should children from now on to exclusively Indian and Chinese schools. This raises many questions about Israel's position towards disarmament and also raises questions about its position towards initiatives to free the Middle East from WMD. Furthermore, Israel has never committed not to use its nuclear arsenal in case of any threats against its sovereignty. Israel's position towards the issue of disarmament is contradictory. In their own statement {Israel} opposes weapons of mass destruction, but it not has fully joined any of the WMD treaties and has not been transparent about its capabilities. Israel's position towards a WMD FZ in the Middle East has been always linked with the development of the peace process in the Middle East and the recognition of Israel as an integral part of the region.

In spite of numerous international resolutions the United Nations Security Council has never summoned Israel to implement them and has yet to impose sanctions to that end. As part of its support for the establishment of WMD FZ the Syrian Arab Republic formally introduced a draft resolution to the Security Council calling for the establishment of the WMD FZ in the Middle East. This draft was discussed within the members of the Security Council – only discussed - and was not adopted; *was not adopted*. Because some permanent members threatened to veto it. The main provision in this draft resolution urges for the implementation of the relevant Security Council resolution, in particular resolution 487 of 1981 and resolution 687 of 1991, which are aimed at freeing the Middle East region of all weapons of mass destruction in particular nuclear weapons.

The issue of searching for energy resources is a sovereign matter. Energy resources are a sovereign matter. Each country should be able to diversify its energy resources including its nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. The essential is stated in Article 4 of the NPT: “*Nothing in this treaty shall be interpreted as affecting the inalienable right of all the parties to the treaty to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, without discrimination and in conformity with Articles 1 and 2 of this treaty*”. Some countries can easily,

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according to their size and wealth, lead their own nuclear programmes for peaceful purposes. And it is not useful to pre-judge such programmes through false accusations of these countries seeking to possess nuclear weapons. On the contrary, the nuclear weapons states should facilitate the transfer of nuclear technology to non-nuclear states for peaceful reasons and should not seek to nuclear technology or any technology whatsoever. All the parties of the treaty, Article 4 of NPT states, undertake to facilitate and have the right to participate in the fullest possible exchange of equipment and materials and scientific and technological information for the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

Ladies and Gentlemen, any attempt by America and its allies, to prevent other nations from seeking to provide themselves with their optimal energy requirements and technological requirements, which is even more important, appears to have become futile and highly risky to world peace and prosperity. Nations such as Brazil, Argentina, Mexico, Nigeria, South Africa, Egypt, Iran, Turkey, Indonesia, and even smaller nations, will definitely become the forerunners of a third world policy striving to procure energy requirements and the most advanced technologies at the lowest possible costs in order to be able to compete in the world market of today. The past eight years of the Bush admin have been characterised by an arrogant desire to impose American homogeneity over world affairs, as a precondition to globalisation, to further globalisation. American ‘ultra’ nationalists and other fanatic groups wanted Americanisation to precede globalisation. The American administration was obsessed by a dream of becoming in full control of the world energy distribution (not extraction, but distribution) and the worlds most advanced technologies. At the same time, what appears to be alarming is not the fact this destructive policy is bound to succeed or fail, but despite its destructive nature, almost half of America, up until today the most powerful nation on earth, almost half still believes in its merits and rightful designs. I think therefore that the world has an obvious obligation towards America, which is to constantly remind the American public opinion of the principles set by the founding fathers of this great nation – the principles of justice and fairness in world affairs, leading to a globalisation providing peace for everyone, energy for everyone, basic food for everyone, and technology for everyone. Only then fair competition between nations and societies will thereafter inevitably shape the world of tomorrow. Thank you.

[Applause.]

**Dan Plesch:**

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It is now my great honour and privilege to now ask my friend Dr Wolfgang Rudischhauser who is with the office of the EU Special Representative on non-proliferation. As we know the EU is at the forefront of the dialogue between the international community and the Islamic Republic of Iran.

[Applause.]

*Mr Wolfgang Rudischhauser, European Union*

Thank you Dr Plesch, Ambassadors, ladies and gentlemen, let me first apologise for my voice I've caught a terrible cold and I have to apologise I won't be as vocal as my good friend Ambassador Soltanieh who I know from Vienna. Second I have to say that, even though it's in the programme, I'm not a doctor, I'm a modest diplomat and once I reach my retirement age I will try to do the Doctorate thesis with which I was honoured with today.

Ladies and gentleman, regional security in the near and Middle East region is one of the most pressing tasks of our century and we have heard a lot today. Other regions in the world went through difficult periods and regional conflicts but none of these have been so persistent than the one in the Middle East. This issue is of greatest interest to the EU, which is deeply involved, and you all know the activities of HR Solana in finding a solution to the conflicts in the region. I'm also very grateful to the institute and to you all to allow me to speak and to outline some of the challenges in front of us. I'm representing, as was said, the office of the personal representative for the non-proliferation of WMD and I apologise for Mrs Gianella, the PR, who is unfortunately unable to come here today.

Ladies and gentlemen, the daunting threat of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in the biological, chemical and nuclear field in the region is one of these challenges we have to face. And it has become more than clear in recent years that we are not dealing with a problem of the distant future but a very concrete and real risk today. A new element, and it was referred to by others in the region, is the renewed interest in many countries across the region, in the peaceful use of nuclear energy, which has added to the challenges. Let me be clear, countries are free to choose their energy mix, but if nuclear energy is chosen we have a collective responsibility that

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programmes are undertaken in such a way that ensures the highest standards of nuclear safety, security and non-proliferation. When we address the issue before us, OUR – which is the EU guidelines for work in the field, is the EU strategy against the proliferation of WMD adopted in December 2003 by the council. An important element of this strategy is that the EU fully supports regional security arrangements, and regional arms controls and disarmament processes which include WMD free zones and which is one of our main topics today. Another guideline for EU work is the Barcelona declaration of 1995, which includes all the Mediterranean countries and the EU, and one of the tasks identified there is to promote regional security, to pursue a mutually effectively verifiable Middle East WMD free zone and to consider practical steps to prevent the proliferation of WMD in the region.

The EU, as you know, since long favours and full supports the establishment of a WMD free zone in the region. This aim is therefore also included in our common position for the 2005 NPT review conference, which continues to be the basis for the EU approach in the NPT framework leading to the 2010 conference. A clear sign of our support is that the EU member states have in the past always voted in favour of the resolution submitted to the UN General Assembly, following its adoption of the 1995 NPT review and extension conference and it was referred to also by the UK director. I do not need to repeat the long history of the WMD free zone in the region, all of you are aware of it. But what is clear is that a solution for the Middle East must encompass all WMD and not be limited to nuclear weapons, to take care of prevailing asymmetries and risks. It is therefore unfortunate that there are still countries in the region that have not signed the NPT, the BTWC, the CWC, the CTPT, and most have not yet an additional protocol with IAEA. Subscription to the Hague code of conduct is also still lacking by most countries. Some, and I agree, have signed the treaties but link their ratification to others taking the first steps or link it to Israel signing the NPT. This is what I call the chicken and egg situation, one awaiting the other.

We can naturally confine ourselves to simply repeating demands for a WMD free zone and wait, and patience was mentioned today. A much better way is to start here and now a concrete dialogue on the conditions necessary for such a zone and on intermediary steps we can pursue. Numerous ideas for intermediate steps have been proposed in the past and I will not repeat them all, most of you are probably aware of them. Let me cite only a few without a particular order. They range from such things as a regional dialogue at government level, security related confidence building measures, national transparency and regional verification mechanisms,

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CTBT ratification, to such old proposals as mutual recognition of sovereign states by all parties, the establishment of sub-regional WMD free zones, and regional moratoria on enrichment and reprocessing. None of these will be easy to agree and we are all aware of that. Also the ACRS talks in the 1990s, and that was referred to also, made some remarkable progress at the time. But if we want to move forward we need to start the process of parallel confidence building steps as soon as possible. New challenges and developments in the regions don't leave us too much time. There is the need to cope with the nuclear energy renaissance in the region, and again that was referred to. We need to cope with new challenges and risks of misuse in the chemical field and in biotechnology. Finally, we are all aware of the clandestine proliferation networks, which have helped to spread military usable technologies to countries and regions and we need to strengthen export controls.

Whilst the picture I have presented so far may seem bleak and not very promising, and rather than deploring the facts of life we need to look forward and reach out for a solution. It is clear that it will not be easy to find or to develop these solutions during a one-day conference, but we can at least produce some ideas for possible avenues along which we can further proceed and my predecessors/speakers have elaborated on a number of them. Let me simply raise some questions which in my view this conference, and we all, need to address. One of these is, how can we best build confidence step by step and is there a particular order in which these steps need to be taken; or in other words how can we overcome the chicken and egg paradox? Are the following ideas possible intermediate steps? Ratification of the CTBT by all countries in the region; parallel signing and ratification of the CWC/BTWC by all countries in the region. Is it an option to jointly agree amongst countries of the region, voluntarily - and I stress voluntarily - not to engage in certain parts of the nuclear fuel cycle activities or engaging in regional centres for doing so. And finally, what would be the best framework to promote the regional co-operation we all want for this area.

A lot of questions for only one day but I hope that we will be able to give at least some answers and I hope this conference will lead to that. Thank you very much for your attention.

**Dan Plesch:**

And I think we should especially thank Wolfgang for his faultless recitation of the most bewildering alphabet soup of international abbreviations I think I've ever heard! So if you're able

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to follow that Sameh please come and join us! So it's my great pleasure to invite our last speaker before our panel discussion, that is Sameh Aboul-Enein currently Deputy Chief of Mission for the Arab Republic of Egypt and a long time diplomat on disarmament issues internationally, in Geneva and elsewhere. Sameh, welcome.

*Mr Sameh Aboul-Enein, Arab Republic of Egypt*

Well let me begin by a personal note, that I am really delighted to be back at my school SOAS as an alumni, and it's a pleasure to be with so many friends and professors, despite that mostly they have lost a lot of hair and grown bald! But Excellencies, distinguished participants, it is indeed a great pleasure to be here among you to deliver this speech on behalf of His Excellency Ambassador Gehad Madi, Ambassador of Egypt to the United Kingdom, who due to pressing engagements could not participate in this important gathering. I wish to extend my thanks to SOAS, Dr Dan Plesch and his excellent team at this Centre for International Studies and Diplomacy, for convening this third annual conference, as well as to the Pugwash Group. I am grateful also to the distinguished participants, previous ones, who have almost covered a comprehensive search and coverage of many of the issues that I was going to discuss so I will be more focused and brief.

Egypt regards the issue of nuclear disarmament with utmost importance. We have consistently exerted substantial efforts towards achieving the international community's irreversible commitment to nuclear disarmament. It remains our conviction that nuclear weapons, with all the destructive power they possess, can never build regional or international peace. At a time when the international community faces serious security concerns, the need for definitely accelerating the implementation of nuclear disarmament commitments is becoming ever more pressing, and definitely it is one of the objectives of this conference that we participate in here today.

The Middle East's special status was recognised in the 1995 NPT review and extension conference resolution on the Middle East as well as in the final document of the 2000 NPT review conference. In so far as it pertains to the NPT and its review cycle, the resolution focused on achieving the following clear objectives; 1) the establishment of a nuclear weapons free zone in the Middle East, 2) the accession to the NPT by all states of the region that have not yet done so, 3) the placement of all nuclear facilities in the Middle East under full scope IAEA safeguards.

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Egypt, on its part, has consistently handled the issue of the establishment of a nuclear weapons free zone in the region with a high degree of responsibility and realism, and has exercised a high degree of restraint - a policy that has kept the Middle East from an arms race over the years which would have had negative repercussions for the region at large. Implementation of the resolution within the context of the NPT will also be an effective means to address new regional challenges to the treaty that have arisen since its adoption. And help forestall the emergence of future non-proliferation issues; of course these issues were looked at closely at the NPT cycle and the ‘Prep Comm’ recently in Geneva as well

It is crucial to note that lack of progress in implementing that 1995 resolution on the Middle East constitutes a direct threat, and I underline that, to regional and international peace and security, since it increases the potential of a nuclear arms race in the Middle East. The establishment of this zone however would undoubtedly represent a pivotal turning point in the history of the Middle East. Not only would it contribute tremendously in promoting regional and international peace and security, and address the security concerns of all states of the region, but it would most certainly represent a practical iteration that destructive arms and weapons would no longer remain the guarantor of security but rather that security is reinforced through their elimination. So we need a total elimination.

Furthermore, it would constitute a substantial confidence building measure that would advance the prospects of overall peace in the region. In this context, Egypt notes that all states in the region, except Israel, are state parties to the NPT. This situation poses the greatest impediment to the implementation of the Middle East resolution and to achieving the treaty universality - the universality of the NPT. It is important to recall that the 2000 NPT review conference urged all states not yet party to the treaty and I quote, “*to accede to the treaty as non nuclear weapon states promptly and without condition, particularly those states that operate un-safeguarded nuclear facilities*”, unquote. Furthermore, there is a strong relationship between the implementation of the Middle East resolution, achieving the NPT universality and consequently the preservation of international peace and security.

From that perspective, we call upon state parties, particularly the P5 – the five nuclear weapons states party to the treaty, and in the context of their primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security - as prevalent members of the UN Security Council, and by virtue

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of their special responsibilities in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, to exert every effort towards achieving that end.

We appreciate the call for patience but I call for urgency, and this is what we are here for.

The international community, unfortunately, has not shouldered its responsibility in achieving the universality of the NPT so far. And in our view has not co-operated enough with Egyptian endeavours to establish a zone in the Middle East. In fact we clearly witness double standards, as we are all familiar, adopted by important members of the international community who speak out loud to discuss certain countries in the region, yet they remain silent when it comes to the case of Israel.

Ladies and gentlemen, the following are parts of a non exhaustive list of concrete measures that I bring to the conference aimed at operationalising the 1995 ME resolution

In this regard it is important to note that the importance of such measure demands a demonstration of a necessary political will by all the state parties. Bearing in mind the relevant, and I don't want to go in to the numbers here; the NPT, the UN General Assembly and Security Council resolutions, as well as the IAEA resolutions, the following proposals should be considered:

- 1) calling upon the five nuclear weapon state parties to the NPT in the context of the responsibilities that I mentioned earlier, to convene under their auspices, a conference of all state parties of the Middle East to conclude a legally binding and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty establishing a nuclear weapons free zone in the Middle East
- 2) inviting the five nuclear weapon state parties to the NPT to immediately undertake bilateral and multilateral consultations with all states of the Middle East region to define the modalities of the above mentioned conference, and a lot of work needs to be done in this respect
- 3) calling upon all state parties to the NPT to implement the resolution of the Middle East but with a specific and a declared time framework, because it has been going on for years now. And also to issue periodic reports to the NPT preparatory committees and to the review conference on their efforts towards the implementation of the 1995 resolution
- 4) urging all state parties to the NPT, particularly the P5, to take the necessary practical measures to bring about Israel's accession to the treaty as a non nuclear weapon state, promptly and without conditions, and to place all of its nuclear facilities under comp IAEA safeguards.

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Distinguished participants, the establishment of a nuclear weapons free zone in the Middle East is a first step towards a creation of an effective verifiable zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East including nuclear, chemical, biological and their delivery systems.

Let me re-iterate here, before concluding, President Mubarrak's initiative, and Mr Dhanapala also mentioned it yesterday. Calling for the establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. It has three main components; a) the prohibition of all weapons of mass destruction, nuclear, biological and chemical in all states of the Middle East; b) providing assurances from all states in the region towards the full implementation of this goal in an equal and reciprocal manner; c) the establishment of proper verification and compliance regional measures and modalities.

Egypt will continue to seek the support of the international community and of all states and think tanks and institutions and academicians and NGOs and the civil society, to rid the Middle East and the world at large of the threat of weapons of mass destruction.

Any reluctance, with respect to the Middle East will only complicate and exacerbate the situation in the region.

Thank you very much.

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## **Expert Presentations**

### **Dan Plesch:**

Thank you ladies and gentlemen, I would like to ask my dear friend Professor Nabil Ayad to take the floor at the panel with his colleagues. The Diplomatic Academy at the University of Westminster is one of the world's foremost training institutions for diplomats from around the world, and we are delighted he is able to join with us here today.

I hope those of you who are in the audience who are not specialists in the arcane subject material of weapons of mass destruction and the acronyms we've heard will appreciate that the subject matter is perhaps one of the gravest we have to face, the preservation of peace and the prevention of a full scale WMD armed war in the region. That is why, I think, so many distinguished diplomats have taken the time to come and be with us here today. So without more ado, I would like to hand over to our distinguished Chair, Professor Nabil will I think introduce our next two speakers from the panel, who will take us up to lunch. And thank you very much for your attendance and participation.

### **Professor Nabil:**

Thank you Dan. Well after all these long speeches, I can assure you – as King Henry the 8<sup>th</sup> told his wives – I won't keep you long! So we are privileged at this table that we have the first lady speaker, after a stream of male speakers. And I won't keep you long, as I said, we are pleased to welcome Sara Eriksen from the Norwegian Defence Research Establishment, Sara.

### *Sara Eriksen, FFI*

Thank you. Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen it is a great honour for me and for the Norwegian Defence Research Establishment to be invited to this conference. I will start by elaborating on what I see as the main challenges to the establishment of the zone, I will continue by exploring some of the prospects and strategies connected to this which will lead to some concluding remarks.

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The Middle East has been described as one of the most complex and difficult regions in the world for developing a common strategic language leading to mutual security for all states in the region. Although the issue of creating a WMD free zone in the Middle East has been on the agenda for more than thirty years, it has yet to approach realisation. This difficulty is often considered a result of the interstate conflict and the security dilemma that dominates regional security politics. The regional conflict zones are complex and overwhelming and to a large degree the security environment is characterised by instability and rivalry. The Middle East is also one of the most heavily armed regions in the world, and this situation is an important backdrop for the efforts to obtain weapons of mass destruction. However, I would like to point out that also domestic political reasons and impact of global powers may also contribute to or explain whether states decide to conform to non proliferation or not. As we have talked about earlier there is the establishment of a nuclear weapons free zone proposed by Iran, backed by Egypt in 1974, and the WMD free zone proposed by Egypt in 1990, have acquired both regional and international support.

However, the rhetoric is far from the reality. Elsewhere in the world nuclear weapons free zones have been successfully negotiated and adopted. However compared to the Middle East, the states in the existing zones did not possess or seek nuclear weapons and mainly wanted to keep other countries weapons away from their own territories. So it can therefore be argued that compared with the Middle East the existing zones have been the easy zones located where there are no nuclear weapons and where the incentives to obtain them are low. I would also like to highlight the importance of four key states in the process of establishing a zone, namely Egypt, Iran, Israel and Syria based on their position in the regional security dynamics. In focusing on these states may provide valuable insights on the constraints and prospects for establishing a zone. And in addition all of them are considered to possess a variant degree of WMD capabilities, which makes them key actors in the disarmament process.

Although all regional states have stated their support for a WMD free zone, no regional confidence building measures have been implemented and no region on disarmament treaty on non-conventional weapons has been concluded. The rationale behind proliferation has varied with countries in time, ranging from security considerations to the decision to increase national prestige. I will not present some of the main challenges to the establishment of a zone.

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First, as we have seen large differences remain on how to reach the goal establishing a zone. This is especially a difference in the starting positions for the negotiations between Israel and the rest of the states. On the one hand, Israel perceives the nuclear option as essential for its security until a comprehensive peace treaty is signed. The other states do not necessarily see the automatic link a zone and the peace agreement and, in their view, Israel's nuclear capabilities are destabilising and their inclusion in the negotiations is a pre-condition for peace and security in the region. The difficulty of establishing a zone also reflects the dominance of security interests and power politics and the failure to establish a common security community where the states have a minimum of common objectives. Let me summarise some key points on the factors behind these different policy positions for some of the states.

In Syria, WMD are tightly connected with perceptions of national security and deterrence. However domestic opinion also makes it difficult to renounce its WMD especially related to the situation with the Golan Heights and the conflict with Israel. The undeclared nuclear option plays an important part in Israel's military doctrine and so far they have been able to maintain a regional nuclear monopoly and at the same time avoid the political costs associated with openly possessing nuclear weapons. Hence it will be difficult to create incentives for Israel to dispose of its WMD. On the other hand, regional states view Israel's nuclear capability as a strategic fact, which may lead to increased desire to acquire WMD.

As for Egypt, the WMD issue has a strong domestic dimension and is dependent on the need to secure its regional standing. I would also like to highlight the importance of the domestic dimension in Iran. Although a hard-line faction is currently most powerful there may be constituencies in Iran for creating a zone. However, nationalists' motivations could hamper this and, in addition, if the international opposition to the enrichment programme is portrayed as denying Iran its rights it will enhance internal cohesion. The issue has also been subject to a game of diplomatic posturing. It seems like some of the parties involved have used the concept of a zone for other political and diplomatic purposes. For example, for Israel it has been easy to support a zone rhetorically because nothing practical will be achieved in the absence of a fundamental political change in the region. This support has neither put Israeli nuclear strategy under pressure nor required any debate domestically. For the Arab states the attempt to link the WMD free zone to the NPT has been an attempt to sort of embarrass Israel and draw attention to its refusal to sign the treaty. And another important aspect regarding the states on both sides is that the support to the zone has not constituted a political challenge because there are no popular

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demands for creating a zone or no strong domestic coalitions that pressure the states in to committing.

As we have seen, all states agree that a zone is beneficial and will lead to a more secure region. There is great disagreement on how to accomplish this goal. National security perceptions are still highly affected by the security dilemma with {'sirisome'?} perceptions of power, and the importance of military capabilities inhibit co-operation. However the motivations behind the countries' security policy are not necessarily constant. I will now move on to discuss some prospects and strategies for approaching the issue.

It is unlikely that the establishment of the zone in the Middle East will occur in the absence of a process of comprehensive Arab-Israeli peace settlement. Yet this does not mean that the only alternative is to leave the issue untouched until the establishment of lasting peace. Some observers have noted that not only the need for a parallel process that addresses both peace and security issues but also that progress in one area is not necessarily dependent on progress in other areas. A zone could improve the possibility of establishing peaceful relations because it reduces the destructive capabilities of the states, and signals trust and conciliation. Furthermore, some hold the view that states can be drawn in to or educated in to more co-operative relations, by expanding inter-state communications and confidence building measures. Over time, this may have a synergy effect so that states develop political consensus on security issues. However this is not a likely scenario in the Middle East in some sense of willingness and commitment to adjust national positions is established, so that there is some overlap of interests. Yet to exclusively base the establishment of a zone on the achievement of a comprehensive peace treaty would postpone the issue indefinitely. In the mean time states may increase their weapons capabilities making it even more difficult to establish a zone.

The main challenge therefore lies in developing an environment in which several states simultaneously are willing to renounce WMD capabilities that they have acquired for very different reasons. In order to encourage the process of creating a zone beyond mere rhetoric, considerable effort is needed to develop a regional security and co-operation structure. In this regard confidence-building measures can play an important role. An agreement on even the smallest set of measures would signal commitment to the establishment of a zone and increase the will to make compromises. Another more informal strategy is to increase the contacts between scholars, NGO's and politicians in order to influence the strategic thinking on issues of security

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and possible frameworks for new security regimes. Another important issue is the inclusion of relevant actors in the negotiations; in the past, states that are in a conflictual relationship with Israel, such as Syria and Iran, have not been included. And without these actors present the possibility of confidence-building, improved communication and increased possibilities for an agreement are largely absent.

External actors may play both a negative and positive role in this process. First, proliferation of WMD by external actors could lead to increased proliferation pressure. For example, Pakistan's nuclear status has influenced the threat perceptions of regional states. Furthermore, external actors may be willing to offer know-how, technology and hardware to regional states, which could further undermine the establishment of the zone. External actors could also encourage the establishment of the zone by providing economic and technological incentives for states. And it is therefore important to involve major powers and external actors, to limit the spread of illegal WMD technology to regional states. The UN Security Council, or specific states, may also provide important assistance as mediators in compliance disputes and as enforcers of the zone. However this role requires a high degree of trust by the regional states in the impartiality of the external actors, and major changes are therefore required in the relationship between Iran and the United States as well as efforts to improve the reputation of the United States among the Arab populations.

Another important question is also what kind of changes are needed in order to move closer to the goal of establishing a zone? Although external pressure may be important in the initiation process it may not be enough to sustain the co-operation agreements. Traditionally there has been a lack of capability but also a renaissance to make co-operation work, and the current domestic arrangements may inhibit rather than promote meaningful co-operation.

Moreover, in the Middle East democratisation might also lead to a strengthened rejection of Israel's nuclear monopoly and Middle Eastern states may have their domestic reasons for not pursuing co-operation because the absence of external threats to national security could increase internal pressures for political reform. However, I would like to note that it is the strength of the domestic political coalition behind the disarmament that is crucial and not necessarily the type of regime. And I mentioned before, none of the regional governments, including Israel, has been able to build a strong domestic coalition behind the weapons of mass destruction free zone.

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In conclusion, so far the benefits of establishing a zone have not outweighed the costs of maintaining WMD. Yet many regional states agree that WMD are a threat, both to national security and regional security and this acknowledgment could be the focus of a future process. It's the lowest common denominator. In this regard learning from states in other regions and the conditions and practical steps leading to the establishment of existing zones could provide insight in to how promote a co-operative environment. Progress in this issue is also dependent upon the ability of external actors to provide incentives, mediation and enforcement. Increasing elite interaction, research activities and confidence building measures are also highly important steps to overcome the absence of a common security vision. There is also need for work on the more technical aspects of a future zone such as verification issues and security guarantees. Although regional leaders have promoted this in terms of general ideas there has been less focus on the more specific components and implications. Based on the outcomes of previous events creating a zone in the Middle East seems like a difficult task and it is expected that only large and lasting changes can convince the states to give up this security that in their view emerges from WMD.

However, focusing on the steps mentioned here today can contribute to change the mindset that has long dominated regional security policies. In conclusion, we need to develop frameworks for creating common visions and for changing the states perceptions of what constitutes national security. Thank you for your time.

[Applause.]

**Professor Nabil**

The next speaker is Professor Paolo Cotta-Ramusino the Secretary General of the Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs. He is well known as an eminent speaker and expert in this field.

*Professor Paolo Cotta-Ramusino, Pugwash*

Thank you very much, well it is the end of the morning so thank you everybody for a nice and important discussion. Thank you for the organizer.

I start with what Wael Al-Assad was mentioning today; namely, that we should not really push the argument that nuclear weapons, or weapons of mass destruction, are useful for security.

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Otherwise, everybody would feel compelled or induced to acquire these kinds of weapons. I think it's a very good argument that should stand.

There is an argument that looks a bit different but in fact is compatible with the first one – that once you have weapons of mass destruction if you feel insecure then you are not going to give them up. And this is the dual part of it. So weapons of mass destruction are present in the Middle East one way or the other and the idea that we can get rid of those in an environment in which countries, including Israel, feel insecure, is not reasonable. So I think that one of the point in which we have to stress is that there is a sort of really effort that we should put in to making secure the guarantee for all countries and states which are present in the Middle East, no exception. This long and difficult process, getting out and getting away – eliminating weapons of mass destruction – can be part of this process, that's very important. And this process should not be discriminatory. If there is a trend in which the security of one state is compensated by the larger insecurity of the other state we are making the problem more difficult. It's a matter of, if you want, reality.

Similarly, look what's happening in Iran. The constraints beyond what is normal, agreed limits by the NPT are doing any effect? Forcing countries to give up by pressure? Part of the fuel production fabrication is that doing any good? Are we getting any good by forcing countries to do something? I think not. I think that we have to rely much more, for the sake of efficiency, on co-operation. It may sound difficult but that's what it is. I can remember always a very good bumper sticker in the U.S. which says, 'You believe education is expensive, try ignorance'. And I think given this situation, we believe co-operation and collective security is too difficult, try war. Is that what we want to do? I think not. Co-operation is important and we need to understand better to each other. And in fact as I see here, my friend Mohammed Al Barouki, we discussed this yesterday afternoon, it is very important that we, that in the Middle East, countries, forces understand each other better, and a sort of more quiet interaction where all the needs are understood.

Unfortunately, the Middle East is a country which has problems with conflict, problems with {distraction?} and also a big problem with dialogue. Israelis and Iranians don't talk to each other, Israelis and Syrians don't talk to each other, Americans don't talk with Hamas, they don't want Palestinians to talk with Hamas and so on – so we're in an environment now where non-dialogue is a form of manifestation of hostility. I think we have to change this. It's important that we talk,

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in the Middle East, with each other, and I'm not Middle Eastern but that's ok – I can be an adopted Middle Eastern! But it's important that we push for really dialogue 360 degrees, and in a quiet way. Dialogue should not be thick and as a proof that you agree or disagree. It's very important to understand that.

I think that all the things are really strong inequities or double standards. These are unacceptable – whenever we try to push for double standards this is always a reaction. I think we have learned that in many years. So avoiding double standards is important, is very important. And you cannot expect a country to do their own job in guaranteed security for all if something is imposed on one and not imposed on someone else. We some negative trends again, I want to repeat that, in terms of guarantees for non-proliferation. The additional protocol, which is an important instrument, is already seen as an instrument of pressure from some states, which happen to be nuclear-armed, to the other ones. So instead of being seen as an instrument for collective security it's being seen as an instrument, which is imposed upon by the most powerful country. And this is damaging the additional protocol.

Today we had a very nice discussion but I got a chill in my back when I heard the words 'zero tolerance against non-proliferation'. See, the style is wrong, I don't know how I can put this! Non-proliferation is a collective good and if there is so much stress on someone, which has zero tolerance on someone else, and is keeping nuclear weapons, that is no good. So, with all due respect to our hosting country, which of course we love, but to convey the message that really this is not the right way to get to the goal. I am not assuming that we are not all convinced that we do not want to have weapons of mass destruction, especially we don't want to see them used, so we have to kind of go back to the basics and understand that really we have to feel it – everybody, all the community, we should take a step back, and say we want really to re-discuss collective security.

Let me just say that, dialogue, I was saying before, it's very important, and we have a lack of dialogue in the Middle East. The lack of dialogue, which goes across countries goes across movements and one of the negative elements which has been arising over a number of years which has been, I think in my opinion, this war on terrorism mentality which has depicted countries as pro-terrorist or terrorist and depicting movements that are necessarily terrorist, creating barriers which are as much ill defined as they are ineffective. So I think that we have to understand this connection between the perceived enemy and these dividing lines – there is a

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contrast between putting these dividing lines and trying to reach the other one. Terrorism is a very, in a sense, limited but powerful and very serious phenomenon that should be contrasted. But just putting too much in to the opposite camp, putting countries all together as supporting terrorism, wedging out one country as opposed to being inclusive is something that in the end is not going to work, as indeed it is not working. I mean, we don't have examples of things working fine up to now in many things, which have been related or associated to the war on terrorism. We have seen that from some critical choices that many provinces have come about so we have to again here go back to basic, we have to re-establish connection and remember that the great discussion that happened during the cold war between Russia -the Soviet Union, sorry- and the US was happening despite the very strong difference in the government and the type of the society on one side and on the other one, we have to be more tolerant - we need more tolerance of diversity. These are countries that are different and we have to understand that some common ground nevertheless can be met.

And I close here by saying that for the limited capabilities we have as Pugwash, we want to promote dialogue across all the boundaries that have been set, that's our firm goal, we are supporting the process of communication in all possible ways, we are on the front line of these and we are very happy to see that in this very room we see different people, different countries, different nations and we see this as a positive sign for the future. Thank you very much  
[Applause]

## **Conclusions**

### **Professor Nabil**

Thank you Professor. It seems to me that in a world dominated by fear all speakers from the Middle East this morning they agreed a nuclear free zone is a must in the Middle East. But they have a problem with the members of the nuclear club, whereby they have optical illusions whereby perception is reality; this is the problem. Members of the nuclear club should honour and fulfil their part of the bargain as set out in Article 4 and the preamble of the NPT which required them to negotiate in good faith on halting the nuclear arms race and move towards the elimination of nuclear arsenals and the means of deliveries. Finally I would like to thank SOAS for initiating and enhancing the public, and I would say universal, debate. There must be a universal debate,

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not only limited to the Middle East or in the United Kingdom but in the world at large. Thank you.

**Dan Plesch:**

Well, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, we have come to the end of our third public conference on the issue. I hope you'll agree with me that this has been a useful development of the debate. I think we have a duty to take this discussion out in to the broader community and I hope to welcome you again to the fourth conference and to events this autumn where we'll have presentations from the research group at Monterey in California on their development of a draft treaty and the proceedings of our first two conferences which are being published as part of the journal *International Relations* later this autumn. So I hope you will join with me in congratulating yourselves on your participation and all the speakers for the enlightenment that they have brought to us all. Thank you all.

[Applause.]