



United Kingdom
Mission to the
United Nations

NPT Preparatory Committee 2019

MEW MDFZ statement

by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

The UK would like to reaffirm its commitment to the 1995 Resolution in the Middle East, which was co-sponsored by the UK, US and Russia, on the establishment of a zone in the Middle East free of nuclear and all other weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems.

As a Co-Sponsor, we fully recognise our responsibilities under the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East, and remain prepared to actively support and facilitate renewed regional dialogue with and among all States of the region in a structured dialogue that is inclusive, balanced, consensus-based, and result orientated, with a view to overcoming the current differences.

We continue to be deeply concerned that the Arab Group decision was tabled without the consensus of all States in the region. Unless some resolution is found that takes into account the concerns of all parties, this is going to severely impede the effectiveness of this initiative. It is our long held view that all processes related to a zone free of nuclear and all weapons of destruction and their delivery systems in the Middle East should be based on consensus and be freely arrived at by all States of the region, in line with the 1995 Resolution and the 2010 NPT Action plan. We encourage the sponsors of this resolution to reach out to all States of the region. The UK strongly opposes any attempt to use this issue to single out one state.

We have not yet seen an agenda for the Conference but if it is to be credible, it cannot just focus on nuclear. It would need to take account of current pressing threats in the region, which includes the use of chemical weapons in the region, an abhorrent weapon of mass destruction, as well as the proliferation of ballistic missiles. We also await further clarity on how this initiative will interact with the separate NPT review process.

The UK has not yet decided whether we will participate in a Conference as mandated by the Arab Group Decision. We have already held several useful consultations with relevant parties in the margins of this PrepCom, and will continue to see the views of affected parties, before reaching a national position.

Mr Chairman,

The convening of a conference will only be a worthwhile, meaningful goal if it is on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at by all States in the region, as set out in the 2010 NPT Review Conference Action Plan. We firmly believe that the way forward is for a discussion on how to bring consensus back to the process.

Thank you, Mr Chairman.