
**Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Review
Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the
Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons**

8 May 2012

Original: English

First session

Vienna, 30 April-11 May 2012

**Report of the facilitator to the first session of the
Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Review Conference
of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of
Nuclear Weapons****Appointment of the facilitator and the convening of the
2012 Conference**

1. In 1995, the Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) adopted a Resolution on the Middle East calling for, inter alia, the establishment of an effectively verifiable Middle East zone free of weapons of mass destruction, nuclear, chemical and biological, and their delivery systems. Subsequently, the 2010 NPT Review Conference emphasized the importance of a process leading to full implementation of the 1995 Resolution.
2. According to the Final Document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference, the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the co-sponsors of the 1995 Resolution, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States (henceforth *the conveners*), in consultation with the States of the region, will convene a conference in 2012, to be attended by all States of the Middle East, on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction, on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at by the States of the region, and with the full support and engagement of the nuclear-weapon States. The 2012 Conference shall take as its terms of reference the 1995 Resolution.
3. In accordance with the practical steps endorsed by the 2010 Review Conference, on 14 October 2011, the conveners in consultation with the States of the region, appointed Under-Secretary of State Jaakko Laajava of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland as facilitator and designated Finland as the host Government for the 2012 Conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction.
4. The facilitator's mandate is to support implementation of the 1995 Resolution by conducting consultations with the States of the region in that regard and undertaking preparations for the convening of the 2012 Conference. The facilitator



is also to assist in implementation of follow-on steps agreed by the participating regional States at the 2012 Conference. The facilitator will report to the 2015 Review Conference and its Preparatory Committee meetings.

Consultations by the facilitator

5. In supporting the implementation of the 1995 Resolution and undertaking preparations for the convening of the 2012 Conference, the facilitator has begun fulfilling his mandate by gathering ideas, views and expectations of the regional States on the establishment of the zone and on the Conference in order to ensure their primary input into the process and to gain a full understanding of the various points of departure. Common ground has also been sought on the organizational aspects of the Conference, such as timing, participation, agenda and other modalities.

6. The facilitator adopted an inclusive approach in order to ensure that the views of all regional States are taken into account in the consultative process. The facilitator has encouraged all States of the Middle East to adopt an open and forward-looking approach and to engage with each other in constructive dialogue and cooperation. The facilitator has emphasized that while the international community and the facilitator can provide important support, the ownership and the ultimate responsibility for a successful Conference and the establishment of the zone lies with them.

7. The facilitator has carried out over one hundred consultations in regional capitals as well as in New York, Geneva, The Hague, Vienna and Helsinki among other cities with all stakeholders, including all States of the region, conveners of the Conference, the nuclear-weapon States, relevant international organizations, civil society and other interested parties. The focus of the consultations has been with the States of the region.

8. Following the appointment of the facilitator and designation of the host Government, an office was established within the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland in order to support the facilitator and assist in the preparations for the 2012 Conference. The office has expertise in the relevant substantive and technical questions.

9. The facilitator has been very well received by all States both within and outside the region. The designation of Finland as host Government for the 2012 Conference and appointment of Under-Secretary of State Laajava as facilitator have been welcomed by all. Since his appointment, the facilitator has consulted on a regular basis with the conveners of the 2012 Conference. The facilitator has received their firm and full support in fulfilling his mandate.

10. All States of the region have engaged in a constructive manner in the facilitation process. The discussions have been conducted in a positive spirit and the interlocutors have approached the issue with seriousness and with an open mind.

11. The consultations have covered a wide range of substantive issues related to the establishment of a zone free of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and their delivery systems and extended, inter alia, to questions such as the scope and parameters of a zone, verification and compliance, peaceful uses, safety and security, confidence-building measures and relevant treaty frameworks. The overall

regional security environment and recent developments in the region have also come up during the discussions.

12. Many States of the region have emphasized that the process provides important opportunities to all States of the region to work together which should not be missed. The establishment of a zone is considered to be a contribution to international and regional arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation efforts as well as to improving the overall security environment.

13. Notably, all States of the region share the goal of establishing a zone. The views differ, however, when it comes to questions of how and within what time frame to achieve this objective. The emphases vary as to the nature of the process itself. A number of States would like to see the scheduled establishment of a zone through negotiations and concrete steps by the participating regional States to this end. Others would like to emphasize the need for a more open-ended dialogue on broader issues and for the political environment to develop first.

14. The urgency of making progress towards the establishment of the zone has been frequently stressed. Some States have referred to the possible implications that slow progress or lack of it might have on the continued vitality of the global and regional non-proliferation efforts and on the current NPT review cycle.

15. At the same time, questions regarding recent political developments in the region have been raised by a number of States of the region in the consultations. Some States have expressed concern over what kind of impact these developments might have on the process.

16. The participation of all States of the region is widely recognized as a prerequisite for a successful Conference. While many countries have informed the facilitator that they will be ready to participate in the Conference, a number of States' position remains open at this stage. No State of the region has rejected its participation.

Preparations for the 2012 Conference

17. The Conference will be convened by the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the co-sponsors of the 1995 Resolution. It is to be attended by all States of the Middle East as mandated. In determining the list of regional participants and parties to be consulted in undertaking preparations, the conveners and the facilitator have referred to the International Atomic Energy Agency Document GC (XXXIII)/887, 29 August 1989, para. 3 (Technical Study on Different Modalities of the Application of Safeguards in the Middle East). Based on the mandate, other participants will include the conveners of the Conference, the nuclear-weapon States and the facilitator as well as the international organizations requested to provide background documentation. While there have been differing views among the consulted parties on the participation of additional States or other relevant actors, it has however been emphasized that the primary role at the Conference must be reserved for the regional participating States. Various views have also been expressed regarding the level of participation. The question of participation requires further consultations.

18. As regards the timing and location, Finland as the host Government has announced that it is prepared to arrange the Conference in Helsinki any time during

2012. The month of December has frequently been mentioned in the consultations as a possibility and logistical planning is therefore under way accordingly.

19. While important progress has been made, there is still need for intensified consultations in order to finalize the agenda, modalities and rules of procedure of the Conference. It has been stressed in the consultations that the agenda should enjoy the full support of all parties to ensure their participation. The Conference has been proposed to consist of a plenary and, if so desired by the States of the region, a number of subcommittees or working groups relevant to the agenda to be agreed upon.

20. The final document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference endorsed additional steps aimed at supporting the implementation of the 1995 Resolution, including that IAEA, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and other relevant international organizations be requested to prepare background documentation for the 2012 Conference regarding modalities for a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems, taking into account work previously undertaken and experience gained. The facilitator has requested said documentation from IAEA, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention Implementation Support Unit and the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Organization. Documentation has been requested by the end of September 2012.

21. The final document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference recognized the important role played by civil society in contributing to the implementation of the 1995 Resolution, and encouraged all efforts in this regard. There has been great interest from civil society regarding the issue. The facilitator and his team have participated in various events organized by civil society actors and have sought to actively engage with non-governmental organizations, academia and think tanks. Extensive work has already been done on this topic that could provide valuable input. The facilitator has raised the issue of contribution by civil society in his consultations. The role played by civil society has generally been viewed as welcome and important in raising awareness, developing new approaches and generating dialogue.

22. As part of the practical steps, the 2010 NPT Review Conference also endorsed the consideration of all offers aimed at supporting the implementation of the 1995 Resolution, including the offer of the European Union to host a follow-on seminar to that organized in June 2008, subsequently held in July 2011 with wide-ranging participation from States and civil society. Further possibilities to be provided by the EU in this regard are being explored.

23. As regards the funding for organizing the Conference, a number of States including the host Government of Finland have already made voluntary contributions or pledged to contribute. States in a position to do so are encouraged to contact the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland.

Next steps

24. While the facilitator can report that substantial progress has been made towards the implementation of the 1995 Resolution and undertaking preparations for the 2012 Conference, it is however clear that further and intensified efforts are needed both by the facilitator, the conveners and the States of the region.

25. Following this first report, the facilitator will continue consultations with States of the region and looks forward to receiving further concrete input from them on organizational and substantive matters related to the Conference, its agenda, modalities, outcome and follow-on steps. Important preparatory work to this end is already under way in the capitals. In order to ensure that the Conference will be attended by all States of the region and to maximize prospects for a successful Conference, further progress and a convergence of views on these issues must be achieved.

26. The facilitator and the conveners have a clear goal and commitment to work towards the organization of the Conference in 2012 as agreed. Ensuring a successful Conference remains, ultimately, the responsibility of all States of the region. While the facilitator will continue to seek and foster common ground on the outstanding issues, the full cooperation and engagement between the States of the region remains vital. The facilitation process requires continued open and constructive attitude by all, both therein as well as in other relevant forums. More intensive cooperation, in particular direct contacts and communication, among regional States would greatly facilitate this goal.

27. In order to reach the shared goal of a zone, we must all ensure that the Conference marks a successful starting point in the process leading to its establishment.

28. The facilitator is grateful for the extensive support he has been offered by all parties throughout the consultation process and looks forward towards the full implementation of his mandate.
