



B
GC

GOV/2000/38-GC(44)/14
27 July 2000

International Atomic Energy Agency

BOARD OF GOVERNORS GENERAL CONFERENCE

GENERAL Distr.
Original: ARABIC and
ENGLISH

Item 21 of the Conference's provisional agenda
(GC(44)/1)

APPLICATION OF IAEA SAFEGUARDS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Report by the Director General to the Board of Governors and to the General Conference

1. In resolution GC(43)/RES/23 (1999), the General Conference, inter alia, affirmed:

“the urgent need for all States in the Middle East to forthwith accept the application of full-scope Agency safeguards to all their nuclear activities as an important confidence-building measure among all States in the region and as a step in enhancing peace and security in the context of the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone (NWFZ”,

and called upon all parties directly concerned:

“to consider seriously taking the practical and appropriate steps required for the implementation of the proposal to establish a mutually and effectively verifiable NWFZ in the region” of the Middle East.

In this regard, the resolution requested the Director General:

“to continue consultations with the States of the Middle East to facilitate the early application of full-scope Agency safeguards to all nuclear activities in the region as relevant to the preparation of model agreements, as a necessary step towards the establishment of a NWFZ in the region”,

and called upon:

“all States in the region to extend their fullest co-operation to the Director General”.

2. The resolution also took note:

“of the importance of the ongoing bilateral Middle East peace negotiations and the activities of the multilateral working group on Arms Control and Regional Security in promoting mutual confidence and security in the Middle East, including establishment of a NWFZ”,

and called upon the Director General, as requested by the participants:

“to render all necessary assistance to the working group in promoting that objective”.

3. The resolution further called upon all States in the region:

“to take measures, including confidence building and verification measures, aimed at establishing a NWFZ in the Middle East”

and requested the Director General:

“to submit to the Board of Governors and to the General Conference at its forty-fourth regular session a report on the implementation of this resolution”.

This report is pursuant to that request.

4. In his Report to the forty-third regular session of the General Conference (GOV/1999/51-GC(43)/17), the Director General described the steps he had taken to continue consultations with States of the Middle East region in seeking to fulfil his mandate from the General Conference. In this regard, the Director General referred to his visits, in 1999, to Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and Morocco. During those visits and at high level meetings, the Director General had reiterated his willingness to provide any assistance, within his mandate and authority, in connection with measures, including confidence building and verification measures, aimed at applying full-scope (i.e. comprehensive) Agency safeguards to all nuclear activities in the region and at establishing a NWFZ in the Middle East. The Director General had also stressed the importance he attaches to obtaining additional, more detailed information from States of the Middle East on all issues relevant to his mandate.

5. The Director General again emphasised these points during his consultations with the representatives of States of the Middle East. These points were also made during the visit of Director General to the Islamic Republic of Iran from 16-18 May 2000. In his meetings with senior officials, the Iranian side expressed the view that adherence by all of the States of the Middle East region to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons would do much to foster confidence both within and beyond the region. They also stressed that Iran remains firmly committed to the establishment of a Middle East NWFZ, a concept which Iran itself had put forward, in 1974.¹

6. The importance of establishing a NWFZ in the Middle East was also noted in the Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Following past practice, the Preparatory Committee for that Conference invited the Director General of the IAEA to prepare documentation

¹ At the United Nations (UN) General Assembly. See UN Document A/RES/3263(XXIX).

regarding the activities of the Agency relevant to Articles of the Treaty. The Background Paper which the IAEA Secretariat prepared for the Conference about Agency activities relevant to Article III of the NPT, described, inter alia, all of the steps which the Director General had taken in seeking to fulfil his mandate from the General Conference as relevant to the Middle East.

7. The 2000 NPT Review Conference, in its Final Document, welcomed the consensus reached in the UN General Assembly, since its thirty-fifth session, that the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East would greatly enhance international peace and security. It also urged parties directly concerned to consider seriously taking the practical and urgent steps required for the implementation of the proposal to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East. Additionally, the Conference reaffirmed its endorsement of the aims and objectives of the Middle East peace process and recognised that efforts in this regard, as well as other efforts, contribute to, inter alia, a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons as well as other weapons of mass destruction. Of specific relevance to the Director General's mandate, the Final Document also noted that the report of the United Nations Secretariat on the Implementation of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East (NPT/CONF.2000/7) stated that several States of the region had acceded to the NPT since 1995, and that with these accessions, all States of the region of the Middle East, with the exception of Israel, had become parties to the Treaty. The Conference welcomed the accession of these States. It reaffirmed the importance of Israel's accession to the NPT, and the placement of all its nuclear facilities under comprehensive IAEA safeguards, in realizing the goal of universal adherence to the Treaty in the Middle East. The Conference also noted that nine NPT States parties in the region have yet to conclude comprehensive safeguards agreements with the IAEA. It invited those States to negotiate such agreements and bring them into force as soon as possible. The Conference also welcomed the conclusion of an Additional Protocol by Jordan and invited all other States in the Middle East, whether or not party to the Treaty, to participate in the IAEA's strengthened safeguards system.²

8. The Director General's Report in GOV/1999/51-GC(43)17 stated that, as a further way of seeking more information from Middle East States about key issues that could assist him in the implementation of his mandate, the Director General had written to the Foreign Ministers of those States, in May 1999, to elicit views. By the time of last year's, forty-third regular session of the IAEA General Conference, eight replies³ had been received to the Director General's letter, the text of which is reproduced in Annex 1. A further response⁴ was received in January of this year. The texts of all of the responses received are reproduced in Annex 2.

² Those parts of the Final Document which relate to the Middle East, and are of direct relevance to the Director General's mandate, are contained in the Section on the review of Article VII of the Treaty. That Section also covers other issues relevant to verification in the Middle East. These include the Conference taking note of the Director General's Statement (to the Review Conference) that the Agency is not, at present, able to provide any assurance that Iraq is in compliance with its obligations under UN Security Council resolution 687 and its reaffirmation of the importance of Iraq's full, continuous co-operation with the IAEA and compliance with its obligations. The Conference also reiterated the appeal to all States parties to the Treaty to extend their co-operation and to exert their utmost efforts with a view to ensuring the early establishment by regional parties of a Middle East zone free of nuclear and all other weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems.

³ From Iraq, Israel, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Syrian Arab Republic, Morocco, Kuwait, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as reproduced in Annex 2.

⁴ From the State of Qatar.

9. Analysis of the responses reveals the following:

10. In terms of the application of **full scope Agency safeguards to all nuclear activities in the region**, there continues to be a fundamental difference of view between Israel and other States of the Middle East region. Israel holds to the view that safeguards, as well as all other regional security issues, cannot be addressed in isolation from the regional process but only within the context of a just and lasting peace settlement. The other States of the region maintain that there is no automatic sequence which links the application of comprehensive safeguards to all nuclear facilities in the Middle East to the prior conclusion of a peace settlement. According to this view, the former would contribute to the latter.

11. With regard to the **confidence building and verification measures**, most of the States of the region consider that a willingness to accept IAEA safeguards on all nuclear facilities in the region is in itself the most important confidence building and verification measure referred to in paragraph 7 of the General Conference resolution. They also see accession to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) as the first, crucial step in this regard. Saudi Arabia however, suggested the possibility of Israel declaring its acceptance of comprehensive IAEA safeguards “without acceding to the NPT or associating itself with any other treaty or legal instrument, at least at this stage”. According to this view, if the IAEA were to create “a new mechanism for dealing with Israel in this area, it would undoubtedly facilitate the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East”. Israel on the other hand, is of the opinion that “the IAEA, by its Statute and mission, has no role to play in settling political conflicts”. Israel maintains that the nuclear issue, as well as all regional security problems, should be dealt with solely within the context of the regional peace process. According to this view, negotiations on such issues can only realistically be expected to take place freely and directly between the regional parties and within the framework of the peace process.

12. Not all of the responses received to the letter of 10 May 1999 address specifically **the types of material obligation** that might feature in a future Middle East NWFZ. Of those that do so, emphasis is variously placed, as in the responses received from Iraq and Syria on the need for equality of the obligations to be assumed by the regional Parties to the zone; on viewing material obligations in terms of those to be assumed by the IAEA, States of the region and the nuclear-weapon-States⁵ as in the response from Morocco and; as in the responses from Jordan, Kuwait and Qatar on the premise that the establishment of a Middle East NWFZ must be a basic step towards eliminating all WMD in the Middle East. In terms of specific, material obligations, comments received have indicated that, in addition to the fundamental requirement for each regional Party to a future zone to accept comprehensive IAEA safeguards, also viewed as important, for example by Qatar, are the types of obligation traditionally associated with NWFZ arrangements⁶. Morocco has said that including the generic types of material obligation identified in successive Reports of the Director General

⁵ Letter from Morocco, emphasising the obligations incumbent on the Agency pursuant to Article III.A.5 of its Statute; obligations incumbent on States of the Middle East region, pursuant to resolutions of the General Conference, including resolution GC(42)/RES/21; and obligations incumbent upon the nuclear-weapon-States to provide necessary support for the establishment of a Middle East NWFZ and to refrain from any action in conflict with the latter and spirit of General Conference resolutions in this regard.

⁶ For example, prohibitions on the manufacture, acquisition, development or testing of nuclear weapons.

to the General Conference, (and reiterated in the Director General's letter of 10 May 1999)⁷, would be an acceptable basis on which to take matters forward. Also cited in this context are some of the provisions of currently existing NWFZ Treaties which might be drawn on. In this regard, Morocco has referred in particular to features of the Treaty of Pelindaba⁸ creating an African NWFZ. These include all of the "traditional" NWFZ-related obligations but also address fundamental regional security concerns such as the dismantling, destruction or conversion of nuclear explosive devices and the facilities for their manufacture; and prohibiting the dumping of radioactive wastes.

13. As for **verification arrangements** which might feature in a Middle East NWFZ, the reply from Iraq has confirmed the basic premise that, in the circumstances of the Middle East, there will clearly be a need for far-reaching, comprehensive and intrusive verification. Accordingly, this kind of verification system, to which the Director General referred in his letter of 10 May 1999, should be applied immediately to all States of the Middle East without exception. Morocco's response to the Director General affirms that the IAEA continues to be the main body responsible for verifying compliance with safeguards obligations and with other, related aspects of NWFZ arrangements contributing to peace and to international security. In that regard, and noting also the impartiality and long experience of the IAEA, Kuwait has expressed the view that any specific regional verification arrangements crafted for a Middle East NWFZ should be seen essentially as useful elements which might, in certain circumstances, complement international verification. Kuwait has said that such an approach would avoid duplication of effort and optimise resources.

14. In terms of the **geographical limitations** of a future Middle East NWFZ, a variety of responses are given to the Director General's letter. Iraq has said that the geographical limitations of such a zone "are obvious". Kuwait, Morocco and, although phrased differently, Qatar, have said, either explicitly or by implication, that the regional Parties to the zone should comprise all Members of the League of Arab States plus Iran and Israel. Morocco has noted that thought is being given to the inclusion of additional, peripheral countries. Morocco and Libya point out that there is no specific, agreed definition of "the Middle East region" in any documentation of the United Nations. Whilst acknowledging that this is so, Saudi Arabia takes the view that this does not constitute an obstacle to the declaration of the Middle East region as a NWFZ. It has said that it might be expedient to declare the region as a nuclear-weapon-free zone on the understanding that the States of the region would accede voluntarily to such an international agreement. This would then reveal the intentions of the States of the region regarding accession to such an agreement. Saudi Arabia has suggested that the Agency should put forward this proposal. Syria has expressed the broad view that what constitutes any Middle East NWFZ would clearly be affected by the convergence or divergence of interests of States within the region.

⁷ (i) those which preclude research and development on and the possession, acquisition, manufacture or stationing of nuclear weapons or nuclear explosive devices; (ii) those which preclude research and development on and the production, importing or stockpiling of weapons-useable materials (i.e. uranium enriched to 20% or more in uranium - 235 and separated plutonium) and require the disclosure of all nuclear activities, including research and development, imports, exports and production; and (iii) those requiring the application of safeguards to all nuclear material, installations and relevant equipment and non-nuclear material.

⁸ Articles 3-9 and Annex II.

15. To date, the Director General has received nine responses to his letter of 10 May 1999. They contain some information that could assist him to make progress, in the future, in fulfilling his mandate. It remains, however, that more than half of the States of the region, namely Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iran, Lebanon, Mauritania, Oman, Sudan, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates and Yemen have yet to respond to the Director General's letter. It is for this reason that the Director General has now written further letters to the States concerned to encourage them to respond to his earlier correspondence.

16. The Director General will use all avenues open to him to continue his consultations with States of the Middle East so as to make further progress in fulfilling his mandate to facilitate the early application of full scope Agency safeguards to all nuclear activities in the region as relevant to the preparation of model agreements as a necessary step towards the establishment of a NWFZ in the region. Also, in the hope that States of the region can agree, as called upon by the General Conference, "to take measures, including confidence building and verification measures, aimed at establishing a NWFZ in the Middle East", the Director General will look into any further ways and means through which he might be able to provide any assistance, within his authority, that the relevant States deem appropriate. In that context, the Director General would, *inter alia*, be ready, with the concurrence of all the parties concerned, to make arrangements for a forum in which participants from the Middle East could learn from the experience of other regions, including experience of confidence building measures, relevant to the application of comprehensive verification in the respective region and to the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones therein.



INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY
AGENCE INTERNATIONALE DE L'ENERGIE ATOMIQUE
МЕЖДУНАРОДНОЕ АГЕНТСТВО ПО АТОМНОЙ ЭНЕРГИИ
ORGANISMO INTERNACIONAL DE ENERGIA ATOMICA

WAGRAMER STRASSE 5, P.O. BOX 100, A-1400 VIENNA, AUSTRIA

TELEPHONE: (+43 1) 2600, FACSIMILE: (+43 1) 26007, TELEX: 112645 ATO, E-MAIL: Official.Mail@iaea.org, INTERNET: <http://www.iaea.org>

IN REPLY PLEASE REFER TO:
PRIERE DE RAPPELER LA REFERENCE:

DIAL DIRECTLY TO EXTENSION:
COMPOSER DIRECTEMENT LE NUMERO DE POSTE:

1999-05-10

Sir,

You will know that, in each of the years since 1991, an item entitled the "Application of the IAEA Safeguards in the Middle East" has been included in the Agenda of the annual, regular session of the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Successive General Conference Resolutions have, inter alia, affirmed:

"The urgent need for all States in the Middle East to forthwith accept the application of full-scope Agency safeguards to all their nuclear activities as an important confidence-building measure among all States in the region and as a step in enhancing peace and security in the context of the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free-zone (NWFZ)."

and have called upon:

"all parties directly concerned to consider seriously taking the practical and appropriate steps required for the implementation of the proposal to establish a mutually and effectively verifiable NWFZ in the region" of the Middle East.

The resolutions have also mandated the Director General of the IAEA:

"to continue consultations with the States of the Middle East to facilitate the early application of full-scope Agency safeguards to all nuclear activities in the region as relevant to the preparation of model agreements, as a necessary step towards the establishment of a NWFZ in the region".

In accordance with the above, and as stated in my report, GOV/1998/45-GC(42)/15, to last year's Forty-second regular session of the General Conference, I have started consultations which build upon the work of my predecessor to fulfil the mandate placed upon me and I intend to continue these. This letter should be seen in that light.

On the first aspect of my mandate, to facilitate the application of IAEA safeguards to all nuclear facilities in the Middle East, there have for long been two sharply differing views: on the one hand that the safeguards issue can be considered only after the conclusion of a Middle East NWFZ agreement within the context of a just and lasting peace settlement, and on the other, that the application of safeguards to all nuclear facilities in the Middle East region should not await or be dependent upon a peace settlement but would in itself constitute a valuable confidence-building measure contributing to such a settlement.

It would be helpful to know your current thoughts on this matter. In particular, I should welcome your views on any practical steps which could be taken now to foster a climate of confidence which might lead to the application of safeguards to all nuclear facilities in the region.

On the second issue relevant to my mandate, successive reports of the Director General to the General Conference, notably the report in document GC(XXXVI)/1019 of September 1992, gave examples of the types of material obligation which might form part of an eventual Middle East NWFZ agreement. They also suggested modalities for verifying compliance with those obligations. Examples of generic types of those material obligations are:

- (i) those which preclude research and development on and the possession, acquisition, manufacture or stationing of nuclear weapons or nuclear explosive devices;
- (ii) those which preclude research and development on and the production, importing or stockpiling of weapons-useable materials (i.e. uranium enriched to 20% or more in uranium - 235 and separated plutonium) and require the disclosure of all nuclear activities, including research and development, imports, exports and production; and
- (iii) those requiring the application of safeguards to all nuclear material, installations and relevant equipment and non-nuclear material.

As for possible verification requirements and modalities, consultations and discussion with representatives of Middle East States have confirmed the basic premise that, in the particular circumstances of the Middle East, a future NWFZ in the region would most likely require far-reaching, intrusive and comprehensive verification arrangements, possibly including mutual inspections by the parties to the zone, so as to foster and sustain confidence that parties were complying with their commitments.

You will know that verification arrangements under existing NWFZ agreements provide for international verification through the IAEA and, as useful complements, for regional arrangements that may be invoked in specific circumstances. Reports to the General Conference have pointed to certain institutional arrangements which might be relevant to nuclear verification in the Middle East including arrangements which would enable other bodies and inspection mechanisms to work jointly with the IAEA. In addition, the three Workshops (in 1993, 1997 and 1998) about safeguards and verification technologies which the IAEA arranged, as requested by the General Conference, addressed, inter alia, some of the tools and techniques used in specific regional verification contexts. Your authorities might regard some of those tools and techniques as particularly relevant to the Middle East.

I should also welcome your country's views about the geographical limitations of a Middle East NWFZ and of the commitments which different groups of States could undertake within it. Greater clarity on this issue is relevant to the preparation of the model agreements foreseen in General Conference resolutions. You will note that the 1992 and 1996 reports to the General Conference gave examples of basic obligations which two groups of States - those located in the region and the declared nuclear-weapon-States - might assume. However, more information from the relevant States themselves about such matters would be helpful. So too would any further thoughts, for example about the possible role of other States.

In conclusion, I should like to reiterate the importance I attach to greater clarity on the foregoing issues to help me to fulfil the mandate from the General Conference. The IAEA is ready to do anything that it can in pursuit of that objective and I trust that I can look to your Government for assistance.

Accept, Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Mohamed ElBaradei
Director General

Translated from Arabic

**TEXT OF LETTER OF 9 JUNE 1999 FROM THE
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF IRAQ ADDRESSED TO THE
DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY**

Thank you for your letter of 10 May 1999, which eloquently highlighted the Agency's urgent desire to address the agenda item entitled "Application of IAEA safeguards in the Middle East", citing paragraphs from resolutions adopted by the Agency's General Conference and the mandate assigned to you in tackling this issue, as well as the prevailing points of view in the Middle East region regarding the optimum approach to applying such safeguards.

I would like to point out that we are aware of the tasks entrusted to you and the steps being taken by the Agency. I have examined your report to the forty-second session of the General Conference, as well as your reports to the General Conference in 1992 and 1996, and the resolutions which mandated you to tackle this issue of the application of Agency safeguards in the Middle East, which is extremely important for the region.

That being so, I would like to put forward our point of view regarding the contents of your letter:

1. No safeguards system can be implemented effectively and efficiently unless it is a comprehensive system covering a whole region or area, and any nuclear differentiation in the Middle East would not be helpful in creating the proper environment for the application of a safeguards system;
2. It is imperative that balanced efforts and commitments by all parties be intensified in order to broaden the basis for the implementation of the Agency's comprehensive safeguards system to cover all parties, in particular "Israel", which has so far signed neither the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons nor a comprehensive safeguards agreement with the Agency. I therefore question the reason behind this appeal to the Arab States - which have already accepted comprehensive Agency safeguards - to apply further stringent, rigorous measures under the Model Additional Protocol, while Israel maintains its nuclear arms arsenal and its nuclear capabilities with a view to continuing to manufacture additional nuclear weapons outside the scope of the international measures being adopted by the Agency;
3. Any partial and coercive international approach to the issue of armament in the Middle East will not achieve the objectives foreseen by the international community because a serious situation currently prevails in the Middle East, which was described by the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference as a "region of tension", and there is a colossal power imbalance, in which Israel possesses a massive arsenal of weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, in addition to long-range missiles, in defiance of the United Nations General Assembly's efforts since 1974 to establish the

Middle East as a zone free of weapons of mass destruction and in defiance of United Nations Security Council resolution 487(1981), which called on Israel to place its nuclear facilities under comprehensive IAEA safeguards and paragraph 14 of resolution 687(1991), which called for the actions taken against Iraq to represent steps towards the goal of establishing a zone free from weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East.

This situation resulting from "Israel's" failure to respect these resolutions is posing a threat to peace and security in the region and in the world and is encouraging an arms race in the region;

4. Iraq underwent a bitter and cruel experience and was subjected, for a long time, to a system of control that was unique in its rigorousness and its arbitrariness and that used unprecedented methods and criteria, based on unjust resolutions that gave the United Nations licence to carry out its mandate fully and comprehensively for several years with respect to all weapons of mass destruction, including those in the nuclear area for which the Agency has responsibility. This mandate went beyond all the control measures and safeguards systems that have been or that are currently being applied anywhere in the world. However, we now note that the same States which - for dubious, political motives - had voiced their alleged fears and anxieties about the situation in the Middle East arising from Iraq's possession of so-called weapons of mass destruction are backing, contributing to and supporting, either directly or in various indirect ways, the programmes and activities implemented by Israel that are directly related to maintaining the development of Israel's nuclear, chemical and biological weapons capabilities and its long-range missiles;
5. Despite Iraq's bitter experience in the field of disarmament over the past nine years, Iraq has not noticed any serious, committed steps by the relevant international bodies to universalize the steps applied to Iraq by applying them to States and parties in the Middle East that possess arsenals of nuclear weapons and publicly vaunt the fact;
6. As for the intrusive, comprehensive verification arrangements proposed in the letter as part of the safeguards system, Iraq considers that they should be immediately applied in practice to all States in the Middle East without exception, and above all to "Israel", whose huge arsenal of nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction constitutes a danger to the peace and security of the States and populations of the region, otherwise it will be impossible to ensure the credibility of any safeguards system;

7. The application of comprehensive IAEA safeguards in the Middle East cannot be linked with a peace settlement, because Israel's development of nuclear weapons and its failure to place its nuclear facilities under Agency safeguards pose a constant threat to the Arab States and to the region of the Middle East. It is therefore imperative that Israel accede to the NPT and that it immediately and unconditionally place its facilities under Agency safeguards and eliminate its nuclear arsenal;
8. As to the geographical limitations of the Middle East region, on which you sought to have our views, these limitations are obvious and were confirmed in the remarks submitted by Iraq to the technical committee entrusted with the consideration of a draft treaty to establish a zone free from weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, which holds its meetings on nuclear issues at the headquarters of the League of Arab States in Cairo;
9. Actions taken by the United States during the preparatory meetings for the 2000 NPT Review Conference and at other specialized meetings to thwart efforts to exert pressure on Israel to accede to the NPT, to place its facilities under the Agency's safeguards system and to eliminate its nuclear weapons played a major role in fostering Israel's tendency to run counter to the will of the international community. Moreover, the role undertaken by the relevant international organizations has been of limited effect in changing this attitude and getting Israel to comply with the will of the international community. The steps taken by the Agency's Director General have brought about no practical or tangible results in this direction over the years, because the application of comprehensive safeguards and the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East were linked to a peace settlement in the region - a linkage which Israel constantly strives for. Serious efforts must therefore be exerted to achieve results that serve the region's security and stability, in other words, that rid it completely of nuclear weapons by applying paragraph 14 of Security Council resolution 687(1991), which was adopted in accordance with Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations and was fully implemented by Iraq, as well as Security Council resolution 487(1981).

Any arrangements made in the Middle East in connection with the application of the Agency's comprehensive safeguards system and the establishment of a region free from nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction cannot be successful, even relatively successful, as long as a selective approach is adopted and double standards are applied in dealing with armament and disarmament issues. In Iraq's opinion, the Agency should follow up the implementation of its General Conference resolutions, as well as the relevant Security Council resolutions and United Nations General Assembly resolutions, which have been adopted by consensus since 1980 until the present time.

**TEXT OF LETTER OF 6 AUGUST 1999 FROM THE
ISRAELI ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION ADDRESSED TO THE
DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY**

Thank you for your letter of May 5, 1999 concerning the General Conference agenda item entitled "Application of IAEA Safeguards in the Middle East". We appreciate the efforts you dedicate to fulfill the mandate placed upon you by the General Conference.

Your thoughtful letter has been carefully studied, and I am glad for the opportunity to respond to it and present our views, to assist in the preparations of your report to the G.C.

As you are well aware, Israel joined the consensus on GC(42) RES/21, consequently stating its fundamental reservation concerning its modalities, because it recognizes that a NWFZ could eventually serve as an important complement to the overall peace, security and arms control in the region.

The policy of Israel has always maintained that the nuclear issue, as well as all regional security problems, conventional and non-conventional should be dealt with solely within the context of the regional peace process.

Moreover, negotiations on these, as all other issues concerned with the security of the region, could only realistically be expected to take place freely and directly between the regional parties and within the framework of the peace process, a point underscored by the Madrid Peace Conference.

The IAEA by its Statute and mission has no role to play in settling political conflicts. Involvement of international organizations such as the IAEA in regional disputes would even be counterproductive to the prospects for attaining a regional settlement as well as for the Agency itself. Not in the least because it may be inappropriately perceived as a substitute to an effort by the regional parties themselves to settle their own differences. The regrettable trend of attempting to bypass a dialogue among the concerned parties in the Middle East has been repeatedly demonstrated in the Agency's Policy Making Organs.

At the appropriate stage, the Agency could render the necessary assistance to the regional parties, upon their joint request, as foreseen by paragraph 6 of the above resolution.

On a more general level, Israel pins its expectations on peace and regional security arrangements that will combine bilateral as well multilateral elements. Inspired by experience in other regions, not in the least that of Latin America, as well as Europe, we hope that proliferation problems will ultimately find their remedy through a combination of political changes, economic developments, bilateral settlements of disputes and regional arrangements such as those that have become commonplace in other regions.

In the Middle East, as earlier in other regions, progress in the areas of arms control and disarmament can come about only through political accommodation and reconciliation. This process, inherently an incremental one, can only realistically begin with modest, even voluntary arrangements. Gradually, over time, as trust is built, it can proceed to include more ambitious cooperative security undertakings dealing with conventional and ultimately also non-conventional areas.

I'd like to conclude by expressing our hope that in the coming months the peace process in our region will move forward and in the future true confidence and reconciliation among the states of the region will overcome old suspicions and hostility, paying the way for increasingly challenging objectives.

Accept, Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.

**TEXT OF LETTER OF 10 AUGUST 1999 FROM THE
PERMANENT MISSION OF THE HASHEMITE KINGDOM OF JORDAN
ADDRESSED TO THE DIRECTOR GENERAL
OF THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY**

The Permanent Mission of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan presents its compliments to the Secretariat of the International Atomic Energy Agency and has the honour to inform that the position of the Government of Jordan regarding the "Application of the IAEA Safeguards in the Middle East" and other non-proliferation issues as well as weapons of mass destruction is as follows;

1. Jordan strongly supports the idea of establishing a Middle East region free of weapons of mass destruction (nuclear, chemical and biological).

2. Jordan has always called for the application of the IAEA full-scope safeguards on all nuclear plants in the Middle East without any exception.

3. Jordan has always called for the realisation of the universality of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) which calls for the adherence of all States to the Treaty. Needless to say that all States in the Middle East are parties to the NPT with the exception of the State of Israel.

4. Jordan believes that practical steps for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free-zone (NWFZ) should be taken as soon as possible so as to give impetus to the Middle East Peace Process. Such a mechanism, once achieved, will enhance the International regime for nuclear non-proliferation which can then be used as a tool for nuclear disarmament.

The Government of Jordan highly appreciates the efforts so far undertaken by the IAEA Director General and expresses its full readiness to cooperate in order to make the application of the IAEA Safeguards in the Middle East a tangible fact.

The Permanent Mission of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Secretariat of the International Atomic Energy Agency the assurances of its highest consideration.

Translated from Arabic

**TEXT OF A LETTER OF 17 AUGUST 1999 FROM THE
PERMANENT MISSION OF THE SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC ADDRESSED TO
THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE
INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY**

I would like to thank you for the efforts exerted by the IAEA Secretariat under your wise direction to attain the Agency's aims and objectives of enhancing peace and security in the context of establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East and endeavouring to achieve safeguarded disarmament worldwide.

With reference to your letter dated 10 May 1999 requesting information on the position of the Syrian Arab Republic's Government on the issue of establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East and the practical steps which can be taken to create an atmosphere of confidence conducive to the submission of all nuclear facilities in the region to safeguards, we would like to state the following:

It is recognized in the international community that all States in the Middle East - with the exception of Israel - have joined the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and bound themselves by comprehensive safeguards agreements. The accession of Israel to the NPT and the submission of its installations to inspection by the Agency would, in our view, constitute an essential part of the confidence-building to which you refer. Needless to say, such confidence among parties cannot be built while further nuclear warheads and material are being stockpiled by Israel, which has recently acquired submarines capable of carrying nuclear warheads. We would therefore like to call upon you once again to remind the nuclear-weapon States of their obligations under Article I of the NPT, in particular their undertaking "not to transfer to any recipient whatsoever nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices or control over such weapons or explosive devices directly, or indirectly; and not in any way to assist, encourage, or induce any non-nuclear-weapon State to manufacture or otherwise acquire nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, or control over such weapons or explosive devices."

As to the second aspect of your mandate, the accession to the NPT of the only party in the Middle East that has not yet joined it and that party's acceptance of a comprehensive safeguards agreement are prerequisites for the fulfilment of all the material obligations mentioned in your letter.

The Agency's long-standing and unique experience of mechanisms and methods of verification makes it the focus of expertise in this field and to a great extent ensures that commitments are complied with - provided that parties possessing nuclear weapons accept such commitments. It is worth mentioning here that such mechanisms are already being applied to all Arab States by the Agency. However, inspections, including mutual verification by parties in the region, cannot enhance and sustain confidence unless the parties are equal in capabilities and responsibilities.

While the workshops held in 1993, 1997 and 1998 on safeguards and verification technology were valuable sources of information for participants about the concept of safeguards and the role played by the Agency in implementing its objectives, they did not, in our view, provide a key to a new mechanism comprising tools specifically tailored to the Middle East region.

Defining the boundaries of the Middle East region is a very complicated matter which depends on the aim with which such a definition is sought. If Iran is part of the Middle East, how could it allow its neighbour Pakistan to acquire nuclear weapons? And if Iraq belongs to the Middle East, how can it accept Turkey having nuclear weapons in its military bases? Such a definition would be much easier if States of the region were equal in terms of their commitments under international non-proliferation systems. A geographical delineation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone would undoubtedly be affected by the convergence or divergence of interests of States within the region. The issue should therefore be considered by all concerned States.

In conclusion, we would like to stress that the highest-priority need for the Middle East region, in its current situation, is for Israel to join the NPT and submit its nuclear establishments to control in accordance with IAEA regimes.

Accept, Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Translated from Arabic

**TEXT OF A LETTER OF 26 AUGUST 1999 FROM THE
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND COOPERATION OF MOROCCO
ADDRESSED TO THE DIRECTOR GENERAL
OF THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY**

With reference to your letter of 10 May 1999, we should like to make the following comments.

The International Atomic Energy Agency has made significant achievements in pursuing its basic objective of using nuclear techniques for peaceful purposes through the application of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the comprehensive safeguards system and the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in most parts of the world.

However, the region of the Middle East continues to be a source of concern to the Member States of the Agency in general, and to the States of the region in particular, especially the Arab States. At a time when all the Arab States have acceded to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, Israel continues to refuse to accede to the Treaty and to place its installations under the Agency's comprehensive safeguards system, thereby constituting an obstacle to the achievement of peace in the region.

Despite the recommendations of the Agency's General Conference, including the latest ones contained in resolution GC(42)/RES/21, and of the United Nations General Assembly, including the latest ones contained in resolution A/RES/52/41, no progress worth mentioning has been made in this area.

In the light of the above, I should like to convey to you the position of the Kingdom of Morocco on the following four points: the definition of the region of the Middle East; the application of the safeguards system; specific confidence-building measures and the different responsibilities; and control and inspection measures.

Firstly, the draft agreement on the establishment of the Middle East as a zone free of weapons of mass destruction prepared by a technical committee of the League of Arab States defines "the region of the Middle East" as "the territories under the sovereignty of Member States of the League of Arab States as well as Iran and Israel". Thought is also being given to ways of including Turkey among the States of the region.

Secondly, with regard to the first aspect of the mandate given to you by the General Conference, the Kingdom of Morocco has always been convinced that the full application of the safeguards system in the region is a separate element which could be implemented regardless of the developments that may take place in the Middle East peace process or the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region. There are two reasons for this:

1. The application of the safeguards system is a universal concern and objective that supports international security and peace. Therefore, its implementation is related not only to the States of the region, although of primary concern to them, but also to all countries of the world because of its impact on security and peace;
2. The conclusion by all the States of the region, including Israel, of comprehensive safeguards agreements with the Agency would constitute an important initial step towards building confidence among the States of the region and would help facilitate the subsequent establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East in line with the provisions of operative paragraph 2 of General Conference resolution GC(42)/RES/21, which affirms “the urgent need for all States in the Middle East to forthwith accept the application of full-scope Agency safeguards to all their nuclear activities as an important confidence-building measure among all States in the region and as a step in enhancing peace and security in the context of the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone”.

Thirdly, with regard to the second aspect of the mandate given to you by the Agency’s General Conference, we consider that the arrangements mentioned in document GC(XXXVI)/1019, dated 16 September 1992, constitute an acceptable basis for determining the type of obligation that a nuclear-weapon-free zone might include.

We also think that it would be possible to draw upon the provisions of some of the various treaties establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones, in particular the Pelindaba Treaty signed in Cairo in July 1996, especially Articles 3-9 and Annex II of the text of the Treaty as reproduced in document GC(40)/14.

It is worth mentioning that the Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in May 1995 adopted a resolution on the Middle East as an expression of the concern of the Parties to the Treaty about the serious situation in the Middle East resulting from the existence in the region of undeclared nuclear activities and nuclear installations not subject to Agency safeguards that posed a threat to regional and international peace and security.

In general, we believe that there are three types of obligation – obligations incumbent upon the Agency, obligations incumbent upon the States of the region and obligations incumbent upon the nuclear-weapon States.

- **Obligations incumbent upon the Agency** in accordance with Article III.A.5 of its Statute, which requires the Agency “to establish and administer safeguards designed to ensure that special fissionable and other materials, services, equipment, facilities, and information made available by the Agency or at its request or under its supervision or control are not used in such a way as to further any military purpose; and to apply safeguards, at the request of the parties, to any bilateral or multilateral arrangement, or at the request of a State, to any of that State’s activities in the field of atomic energy”.

- **Obligations incumbent upon the States of the region**, which were called upon by the General Conference in operative paragraph 3 of resolution GC(42)/RES/21 to consider seriously taking the practical and appropriate steps required for the implementation of the proposal to establish a mutually and effectively verifiable nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, and which were invited to adhere to international non-proliferation regimes, including the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, as a means of complementing participation in a zone free of all weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East and of strengthening peace and security in the region.
- It should be recalled that resolutions of the Agency's General Conference and the United Nations General Assembly also refer to the **obligations incumbent upon the nuclear-weapon-States**, namely, the obligation, on the one hand, to provide the necessary support for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region and, on the other hand, to refrain from any action in conflict with the letter and the spirit of the resolutions in which the General Conference called upon all other States, especially those with a special responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, to render all assistance to the Director General by facilitating the implementation of such resolutions. Those States should not provide any technical assistance, material support or technological expertise that would accelerate the nuclear armament process in the region.

Fourthly, with regard to control and inspection measures, Morocco believes that the Agency remains, in accordance with its Statute, the principal body responsible for the application of the comprehensive safeguards system and the measures that might be required under a treaty establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone, taking into account the fact that the African Arab States are currently subject to the control provisions and measures specified in the Pelindaba Treaty.

Finally, even if some of the measures that are to be implemented are independent and separate, some of them continue to be linked to the climate of détente and the positive development that may be seen in the Middle East peace process, which seeks to find a comprehensive and just peace for all peoples of the region.

I am confident that, thanks to your steadfastness, wisdom and continuous efforts, you will be able to achieve substantial progress in the implementation of the General Conference resolutions that seek to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East and that you will be able to ensure that the Agency plays its role in strengthening international security and peace in this region.

Accept, Sir, the assurances of my highest esteem.

Translated from Arabic

**TEXT OF A LETTER OF 7 SEPTEMBER 1999 FROM THE
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF KUWAIT ADDRESSED TO THE
DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY**

With reference to your letter dated 10 May 1999, in which you request the State of Kuwait's opinion concerning the item entitled "Application of IAEA Safeguards in the Middle East" included in the agenda of the 43rd regular session of the International Atomic Energy Agency's General Conference to be held in Vienna this September, I have pleasure in conveying to you the opinion of the Government of the State of Kuwait requested in the above-mentioned letter.

- (1) The State of Kuwait strongly supports the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, and to this end it supports the application of comprehensive Agency safeguards to all nuclear installations in the region as a necessary step towards the declaration of the region as a nuclear-weapon-free zone.
- (2) The State of Kuwait regards the idea of establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East as a basic step towards achieving the paramount goal of freeing the region from all forms of weapons of mass destruction (nuclear, chemical, biological and ballistic). The State of Kuwait also looks forward to the conclusion of an agreement among the States of the region on limiting the level of conventional weapons in the region as well.
- (3) One of the prerequisites for the achievement of that goal is that Israel - the only State in the region which has not yet done so - should accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and join the comprehensive safeguards system.
- (4) The application of the comprehensive safeguards system in the region should not be linked with the achievement of a comprehensive peaceful settlement - which the State of Kuwait hopes will happen as soon as possible - since the Agency's General Conference resolutions, for several years and as a general principle, have called upon all States of the region, as well as other States, to place all their nuclear installations under Agency safeguards. The existence of an effective safeguards system would itself strengthen the mutual confidence required for such a settlement.
- (5) The State of Kuwait understands the term "Middle East region" to mean all the States that are members of the League of Arab States as well as Iran and Israel.

- (6) As is the case with the existing conventions establishing other nuclear-weapon-free zones, the principal responsibility with respect to verification arrangements must be entrusted to the IAEA since it is a neutral international organization with extensive experience in this field. In order to avoid duplication of efforts and waste of resources, the State of Kuwait is not in favour of the establishment of a regional institution or administrative body specifically for this purpose. However, this does not preclude the possibility of setting up specific regional arrangements - as useful complementary elements - which might be invoked in certain circumstances, such as mutual inspections by the parties in the region.
- (7) With regard to the types of obligation, we support the idea that any agreement on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East that might ultimately be concluded should provide for all three generic types of material obligation mentioned as examples in your above-mentioned letter.
- (8) In this context, it is important - in addition to what has been stated in the previous paragraph - that all the States in the region undertake to disclose - honestly and completely - all their nuclear or nuclear-related installations, equipment and programmes, and that, in return, the Agency's verification activities be effective, comprehensive and capable of detecting both declared and clandestine nuclear installations.
- (9) States exporting nuclear technology must undertake not to supply countries of the region with material or technology related to the acquisition, development or production of nuclear weapons, regardless of whether the exporter is from the public or the private sector, and must undertake to prohibit such activities and impose penalties on any of their nationals involved in such activities.

The State of Kuwait highly appreciates your unremitting efforts since 1991 to facilitate the optimum application of Agency safeguards in the Middle East, and would like to reiterate its intention to render every possible assistance in this respect.

Accept, Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Translated from Arabic

**TEXT OF A LETTER FROM THE
GENERAL PEOPLE'S COMMITTEE OF FOREIGN LIAISON OF THE
LIBYAN ARAB JAMAHIRIYA ADDRESSED TO THE
DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY**

With reference to your letter dated 10 May 1999, in which you request the opinion of the Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya concerning the application of Agency safeguards to all nuclear installations in the Middle East, the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in that region, the priority to be accorded to the implementation of Agency safeguards and the geographical limitations of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, I have the honour to convey to you the following:

1. The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya is a party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, has concluded a comprehensive safeguards agreement and places its installations under the IAEA's safeguards system. It reiterates its support for every effort and measure aimed at the complete elimination of all nuclear weapons and its support for the endeavours to make the Middle East a region free of all types of nuclear weapons;
2. The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya believes that the main obstacle to making the Middle East a nuclear-weapon-free zone lies in Israel's persistent refusal to accede to the NPT, its refusal to implement Security Council resolution 487 (1981), which calls on it to place its nuclear facilities under the IAEA's safeguards system, and its failure to respond to the repeated calls by the General Assembly, the Security Council and the IAEA for it to renounce any possession of nuclear weapons;
3. In the light of the above, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya considers that a nuclear-weapon-free zone cannot be established in the Middle East unless Israel accedes to the NPT, places all its nuclear installations under the IAEA's safeguards system and draws up measures for the elimination of its nuclear weapons and believes that such steps must take precedence over any other action;
4. The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya declared in its letter No. 2/3/452 of 2 May 1990 reflected in document GOV/2682-GC(XXXVII)/1072 of 10 September 1993 its reservation regarding what was stated in document GC(XXXIII)/887 concerning its inclusion in the Middle East region. It now reaffirms this position because there is no specific definition of this region in either the General Assembly's resolutions or any other United Nations document.

Accept, Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Translated from Arabic

**TEXT OF A LETTER OF 15 SEPTEMBER 1999 FROM THE
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF SAUDI ARABIA ADDRESSED TO THE
DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY**

I have pleasure in referring to your letter of 10 May 1999 concerning the agenda item entitled the "Application of IAEA Safeguards in the Middle East", which has been regularly included in the agenda of the annual, regular session of the Agency's General Conference. You also mentioned several matters related to the urgent need for all States in the Middle East to accept forthwith the application of full-scope Agency safeguards to all their nuclear activities as an important confidence-building measure among all States in the region and as a step towards enhancing peace and security in the context of the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone. In addition, you raised questions on this subject, and indicated that you wished to know our thoughts and views on this matter and on any practical steps which could be taken to foster a climate of confidence which might lead to the application of safeguards to all nuclear facilities in the region. In this connection, I have pleasure in making the following points:

- The idea of establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East is not new; it is one of the principal demands of the States in the region and it is a matter which falls within the context of freeing the regions of the world from this lethal weapon. Statements by officials of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia have always contained calls for the Middle East to be freed from nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. I trust that you agree with me that this will not be achieved as long as the State of Israel remains, as the only State in the region, outside the framework of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, and its nuclear installations remain outside the international control of the Agency, currently headed by you;
- Although Israel remains beyond the scope of the NPT at present, Israel's nuclear installations could be made subject to the Agency's control so that the Agency could verify them as it has been doing in the case of the other States in the region which have peaceful nuclear activities. Israel could take serious practical steps to put an end to this stalemate situation by declaring its acceptance of the application of full-scope safeguards without acceding to the NPT or associating itself with any other treaty or legal instrument, at least at the present stage;
- If the Agency created a new mechanism for dealing with Israel in this area, it would undoubtedly facilitate the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East;
- The question of the definition of the Middle East region and its geographical limitations is not a difficult one, although no United Nations document or General Assembly resolution contains any definition of the Middle East as a region, and it

does not constitute an obstacle to the declaration of the region as a nuclear-weapon-free zone. It might be expedient to declare the region as a nuclear-weapon-free zone on the understanding that the States of the region would accede voluntarily to such an international agreement. This would then reveal the intentions of the States of the region regarding accession to such an agreement. I suggest that the Agency should put forward this proposal;

- The application of Agency safeguards in the Middle East without Israel's accession to the NPT means that Israel is not legally bound to open up its nuclear installations to enable the Agency to inspect and control its nuclear activities;
- As is well known, all States of the region, with the exception of Israel, are Parties to the NPT and consequently have a clear legal obligation to apply full-scope safeguards. Most of these States do not currently have any nuclear activities and have not had any in the past. In other words, they do not have any nuclear material to be made subject to full-scope safeguards. They will be able to possess nuclear material for their future nuclear programmes only if they conclude a comprehensive safeguards agreement with the Agency. Consequently, the application of full-scope safeguards to the States surrounding Israel is undisputed and in fact they already apply since these States are Parties to the NPT. As usually stated in the reports of the Agency's Director General, Israel minimizes the importance of considering the application of full-scope safeguards as a starting point by repeatedly asserting that priority should be given to establishing comprehensive peace and security in the region as a basic step, which would then be followed by limitation of nuclear weapons and the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East through the necessary verification measures;
- Israel believes that consideration of the implementation of successive General Conference resolutions entitled the "Application of IAEA Safeguards in the Middle East" should be deferred until a lasting peace settlement with neighbouring countries has been reached and, consequently, an agreement has been concluded to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, followed by consideration of safeguards questions and mutual verification measures as an integral part of this process;
- Israel's refusal to accept the application of full-scope safeguards to its nuclear programmes constitutes an obstacle to the implementation of successive General Conference resolutions. As you know, no formula to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East can be reached unless all the States concerned stand on common ground.

The above points, which I have touched upon briefly, may well reflect some of the Arab concerns and fears of the peoples of the region about the threat of nuclear weapons that has been hanging over them for a long time, while many regions of the world have been able to declare themselves as nuclear-weapon-free zones. We desperately need such a measure in our region in view of the increased threat posed by this weapon and our inability even to initiate any practical steps to free the region of nuclear weapons given Israel's insistence on tackling this issue only on its own terms.

I hope that the above comments will contribute to your efforts to develop whatever concept you desire through your consultations with Member States of the Agency on the application of the IAEA safeguards in the Middle East.

Accept, Sir, the assurances of my highest esteem.

Translated from Arabic

**TEXT OF A LETTER OF 21 DECEMBER 1999 FROM THE
PERMANENT MISSION OF THE STATE OF QATAR TO THE
DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY**

Thank you for your letter of 10 May 1999. I have pleasure in informing you in this connection of our views on the main questions raised in your letter.

- The position of the State of Qatar is based on the principle that the Middle East and the Gulf should be declared as a zone free of nuclear weapons, free of facilities for their development and production and free of all delivery systems for such weapons. We appreciate the efforts made in this field by the International Atomic Energy Agency and other relevant international bodies to create a joint regional framework aimed at the elimination of nuclear weapons, the prohibition of their development and production, and the removal of delivery systems for such weapons from our region under an effective system of international control and verification. Pending the attainment of this objective, we believe that all signatory States of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) must have the legitimate right to comprehensive, effective and credible security guarantees that are unconditional and legally binding.
- The State of Qatar believes that the achievement of this objective must constitute a necessary step towards the goal of freeing our region from all weapons of mass destruction, as well as their ammunition and delivery systems, together with the elaboration of the necessary controls and limitations for the establishment of an effective regional and international system to control the elimination of these weapons, the cessation of activities aimed at their development and production, and effective and credible verification.
- The creation of this regional framework for the elimination of nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction, and for the cessation of activities aimed at their development and production and at the possession of delivery systems for such weapons, and hence of the required regional/international system of the necessary

control and verification procedures, should constitute a fundamental, vital and integral part of the Arab-Israeli peace process so that the achievement of this objective would take place in parallel to and at the same time as the achievement under the peace process of its desired objective of establishing a just and comprehensive lasting peace in the region. In any case, this falls within the principles established by the peace process and within the framework of the multilateral talks among the parties involved in disarmament and arms reduction. The State of Qatar hopes that these talks will be resumed once the bilateral negotiation channels have been revitalized and real and tangible progress has started to be made towards achieving their goals.

- With regard to verification and control modalities and the application of safeguards referred to in your letter, we believe that these modalities and safeguards should be applied to all nuclear and related non-nuclear material, facilities, activities and programmes in all countries of the region without exception, since this would constitute the ideal way of establishing a serious, comprehensive and credible system of control and verification capable of distinguishing between activities and programmes of a military nature and those that are restricted in nature and scope to strictly civilian purposes.
- The State of Qatar believes that the geographical definition of “Middle East region” in this context should cover the region extending from the shores of the Atlantic in Maghreb and Northern Africa, crossing the Mediterranean and the horn of Africa, to the Gulf region and the countries bordering it.
- With regard to measures to build confidence among all States of the region in order to foster security, stability and peace in the region, we believe that the first basic step in this connection would be for Israel, as the only State in the Middle East that currently has nuclear weapons, to accede to the NPT as all Arab States have done. Furthermore, we believe that Israel should cease the development, testing or production of new nuclear weapons and delivery systems for such weapons, and agree to place its installations, reactors and all other facilities related to nuclear research, development and production and other related programmes under international control and verification and the Agency’s recognized, comprehensive safeguards in this field.