

# **Statement by the State of Palestine**

**77<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly**

**First Committee**

**Cluster 1: Nuclear Weapons**

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Mr. Chair,

The State of Palestine aligns itself with the statements made by the Non-Alignment Movement (NAM) and the Arab Group.

The State of Palestine stresses the importance of fully adhering to the rules of international law, including international humanitarian law, and reaffirms that the existence, use and threat of use of weapons of mass destruction under any circumstances constitutes a grave breach of fundamental principles of international law and the purposes of the Charter of the United Nations.

The State of Palestine believes that the only way to eliminate the danger and threat posed by weapons of mass destruction especially nuclear weapons is their total elimination.

The state of Palestine reaffirms that the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of nuclear weapons (NPT) is the cornerstone of the global regime of nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and peaceful use of nuclear energy. In this regard, we reiterate our deep disappointment over the back-to-back failure of the 9th and 10th review conferences of the treaty. This stalemate is one of the reasons that leads to eroding the credibility of the disarmament and non-proliferation regime.

In this context, the State of Palestine urges all state parties to the NPT to act nationally, bilaterally and through multilateral frameworks and within the sphere of the United Nations Charter and all International conventions and norms to advance the commitments and obligations that fall on each and every one of us.

Mr. Chair,

The State of Palestine is proud to have taken part in the elaboration of the treaty on the prohibition of nuclear weapons and to have been among the first States to join it, contributing to its early into force. The treaty codifies and furthers existing rules of international law and contributes to upholding them including by addressing a major gap between nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction for which binding agreements have been reached, prohibiting them in accordance with the most basic rules of international humanitarian law. The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons does not contradict the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, but rather complements it and pushes towards the achievement of its objectives.

Mr. Chair,

The State of Palestine stresses once again the importance and contribution of nuclear-weapon-free zones to the strengthening of the global disarmament and non-proliferation regime. Therefore, it recalls the necessity of supporting all efforts made in this regard.

In this context, we welcome the convening of the first session of the Conference on the Establishment of a Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and all other Weapons of Mass Destruction in the Middle East, which was held in November 2019 under the Presidency of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the success of that session in reaching positive results and adopting several important substantive decisions. It also welcomes the convening of the second session under the presidency of the State of Kuwait, which succeeded in adopting the rules of procedures for the conference, and led to the establishment of an informal working

committee concerned with continuing the consultations, in addition to the adoption of a final report. We look forward to a successful third session of the conference under the presidency of Lebanon.

The State of Palestine reiterates that the conference is a framework that allows the participation of all parties and takes its decisions by consensus. Therefore, the conference does not exclude anyone, even if one party decides to boycott it, Israel, for a clear reason, its desire to continue to possess nuclear weapons illegally, considering that it is above the law and that everyone must abide by the rules while it enjoys all the exceptions which threaten the security and safety of our region and undermine the international disarmament and non-proliferation regime.

The State of Palestine invites all countries to support the conference, including nuclear weapon states especially the sponsors of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East region.

Thank you,