



**THE CONFERENCE ON A ZONE FREE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND
OTHER WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION IN THE MIDDLE EAST:
HOW TO OVERCOME THE OBSTACLES?**

Side-Event at the 2015 NPT Review Conference

United Nations Headquarters (ECOSOC Chamber), New York, 1st May 2015, from 1.15 to 2.30 pm

BACKGROUND

In the 2010 Final Document of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference, NPT States Parties agreed to convene a conference in 2012 on establishing a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction (WMD) in the Middle East in accordance with the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference decision. This event did not take place as planned in Helsinki in 2012 or later, despite the efforts of the Finnish Facilitator, Amb. Jaakko Laajaava, who conducted consultations with states of the region and the Convenors of the conference (Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States). This issue will no doubt figure high on the agenda of the 2015 NPT Review Conference in New York from 28 April to 9 May 2015. As a side-event in the early phase of the Review Conference, UNIDIR and the Permanent Missions of Iraq to the United Nations in New York and Geneva organize a lunchtime meeting with experts to address possible ways and means of overcoming the obstacles that have prevented such a conference from taking place and still remain to be overcome.

At this Side-Event, a panel of two experts will address the following topics:

- I. **The Possible Measures to be Included in a Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction in the Middle East:** points to be addressed could include: simultaneous accession to or ratification of existing WMD multilateral agreements (Chemical Weapons and Biological Weapons Conventions, Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty) with commitment to a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty, and accession of Israel to the NPT as part of the Zone Treaty; confidence-, security- and transparency-building measures, such as notification measures, hotlines, non-first use declarations including on means of delivery of WMD such as ballistic and cruise missiles, as part of a Zone agreement;
- II. **The Possible Functioning of an Agreement on a WMD-free Zone Treaty:** examining the possible structure and content of a WMD-free zone treaty including on verification (additional to existing disarmament and non-proliferation regimes or region-specific); comparing a potential WMD-free zone with the existing nuclear-free zones and sharing regional experiences, including on institutional issues such as governance, decision making, transparency vs. confidentiality, etc.

AGENDA

Chair: **Mr Jarmo Sareva** (Director, UNIDIR)

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| 13.15 | Opening Remarks by HE Mr Mohamed Ali Alhakim , Permanent Representative of Iraq to the United Nations in New York, and Mr Jarmo Sareva , Director of UNIDIR |
| 13.25 | <i>The Possible Measures to be Included in a Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction in the Middle East.</i> Dr Zia Mian , Director, Program on Science and Global Security, Princeton University, USA |
| 13.45 | <i>The Possible Structure and Functioning of an Agreement on a WMD-free Zone Treaty:</i> Dr Patricia Lewis , Research Director, International Security, at Chatham House, London (UK) |
| 14.05 | Discussion and Concluding Remarks |
| 14.30 | End of the event |