

Position Paper for the Conference on Disarmament

The agenda for the Conference on Disarmament focuses on three issues: Preventing an Arms Race in Outer Space, Improving Compliance with Non-proliferation, Arms Limitation and Disarmament Agreements, and Non-State Actors and the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction. The Iraqi people face difficult security challenges in their daily lives related to these issues, but this discussion transcends the concerns of any one country as they are truly global issues with potentially devastating consequences if they are not adequately addressed. The Republic of Iraq urges all committee members to work together in a spirit of cooperation to seek solutions to these complex problems in order to achieve a safer and more secure global environment.

I. Preventing an Arms Race in Outer Space

The Republic of Iraq is fully committed to the peaceful use and exploration of space by all nations of the earth established under Article I, of the *Outer Space Treaty* (OST) (1967). Iraq also recognizes the universal importance of paragraph 1, Article IV of OST, and Article I, 1(a) of the *Limited Test Ban Treaty* (1963) in keeping the celestial bodies free of the specter of weapons of mass destruction (WMD). The Republic of Iraq fully supports the position of the United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's message to the session of the Conference on Disarmament (CD) on 24 January 2007, that the prevention of an arms race in outer space (PAROS) continues to present an "urgent challenge." Increased utility of space for military activities, highlighted by recent demonstrations of satellite vulnerability, threaten "peaceful uses" of space enshrined under Article I, OST (1967). At the same time, civilian use of space for many globally beneficial endeavors increases annually. The Republic of Iraq urges all CD member states to engage in constructive discussion aimed at addressing weaknesses in the existing framework of legal treaties governing space activities. The Republic of Iraq firmly believes that failure to address these issues seriously jeopardizes continued access and use of space for peaceful purposes of by all nations.

Iraq recognizes the importance in advancing the agenda of the CD in regard to PAROS. We encourage all member states to support the measures adopted under United Nations General Assembly Resolution *A/RES/61/58, Prevention of an arms race in outer space*, (2006) and *A/RES/61/75, Transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities*. (2006) The Republic of Iraq also supports efforts to precisely define the key parameters of space and space activity laid out in the Committee for Disarmament Resolutions *CD/1779* (2006) and *CD/1780* (2006) as a positive initial step in working towards an updated treaty governing space activities. Iraq is also aware of the concerns of states who view strengthening of the provisions of the 1967 OST as a threat to use of space for the purposes of protecting national security, particularly those voiced by the United States in NSC-49, 14 September 1996. Iraq recognizes the need to address such concerns as protection for orbital assets and urges this measure be adopted on the conference agenda.

The Republic of Iraq recognizes that with the increasing militarization of space, the risks of weaponization of space also increase. Practical measures should continue to be examined to reduce catastrophic damage to orbital zones heavily populated by satellites. Iraq calls on all nations to commit to reducing the dangers of all forms of orbital debris that threatens the peaceful use of space.

II. Improving Compliance with Non-Proliferation, Arms Limitation, and Disarmament Agreements

The Republic of Iraq wishes to underline its support for the *Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty* (NPT) (1968) as the cornerstone of global cooperative efforts to curb nuclear weapons technology use. Iraq urges all remaining nations to sign and adopt the NPT, in order to establish a global consensus on the necessity for arms control agreements. In keeping with the spirit of the goals of the Conference on Disarmament since its inception in 1979, the Republic of Iraq places a high value on progressing toward a world free of nuclear weapons, creating an environment safe from the threat of nuclear war. However, as expressed by many fellow countries party to this committee at the NPT Review Conference (2005), we hope for more substantial progress in the future. We reaffirm our 28 February, 2006 statement on behalf of the Group of 21 that it is necessary to establish an ad hoc committee tasked with negotiating a nuclear weapons convention to proceed from the current impasse. Iraq envisions better collective compliance with the terms of existing treaties and agreements, eventually eliminating the world's nuclear arsenals.

The Republic of Iraq is committed to a Middle East free of nuclear weapons proscribed by Article I of 1/S/23500, *Resolution on the Middle East*, (1995). President of Iraq, Jabal Talabani, reaffirmed this commitment in his speech to the General Assembly on 22 September 2006 where he expressed Iraq's desire for a "Middle East free of weapons of mass destruction, especially nuclear weapons." The South America and Africa have successfully achieved such regional agreements in conceiving the Treaties of *Tlatelolco* (1969) and *Pelindaba* (1996), respectively. These offer successful models for regional nuclear security and the Republic of Iraq shares with the majority of other Middle East states the vision for a similar nuclear-free zone across the Middle East. To achieve this end, the Republic of Iraq calls on all Middle East countries to abide by existing international treaties governing nuclear weapons. The Republic of Iraq respectfully calls upon the government of Israel to sign and ratify the NPT in order to advance this vision of nuclear-free Middle East.

Finally, Iraq supports the efforts of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) as the lead authority for nuclear accountability. It is imperative for the IAEA to receive full cooperation from all nations in order to enhance global security. Specifically, the Republic of Iraq calls upon all countries in the Middle East to abide by the inspection regimes set forth by the IAEA, paving the way for regional nuclear stability and disarmament.

III. Non-State Actors and the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction

Over the past decade, both the frequency and magnitudes of conventional terrorist attacks have risen dramatically, as demonstrated by the devastating bombings in Bali (2002), Istanbul (2003), Madrid (2004), and London (2005), which collectively claimed the lives of hundreds and injured thousands. As acts of terrorism become more violent, the need for adequate control over weapons of mass destruction and their components is of utmost importance. The failed attempts by al Qaeda to acquire highly enriched uranium in Sudan in the mid 1990's and then later to design a crude nuclear weapon in Afghanistan as well as the 1995 Tokyo subway attack by Aum Shinrikyo are alarming displays of the persistence of some non-state entities to gain and use WMD capabilities. As does much of the global community, the Republic of Iraq recognizes the potential for horrible consequences if WMDs, particularly nuclear weapons, were to fall into the hands of such terrorist organizations or other non-state entities.

The Republic of Iraq supports every effort to prevent such events from happening, beginning with the strict accountability of fissile and radioactive materials. As a member of the Illicit Trafficking Database (ITDB) of the IAEA, Iraq works in coordination with other member states to control and account for fissile and radioactive materials, and in the event of theft, to assist in tracking those materials and the criminals involved. The Republic of Iraq also continues to support United Nations Security Council Resolution *S/RES/1373* (2001) and its successor, *S/RES/1540* (2004), both of which passed unanimously in the United Nations Security Council. Under these, states agreed to condemn terrorist activities, deny safe haven to nuclear terrorists, refrain from supporting non-state actors who intend to acquire WMDs, and enhance controls over existing fissile material within their borders. Furthermore, to help deter nuclear terrorism, states must recall their commitments made under United Nations General Assembly Resolution *GA/RES/60/1*, item 81 at the 2005 World Summit in Madrid, Spain to "condemn terrorism in all of its forms and manifestations, wherever and for whatever purposes, as it constitutes one of the most serious threats to international peace and security."

Finally, the *International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism* (2005) provides a good framework for justice, as Articles V, VI, and XI demand that states either extradite or punish within their own legal systems those involved with terrorist activities and movement of fissile materials. This *Nuclear Terrorism Convention* provides an excellent platform for international cooperation and the deterrence of such crimes, and paved the way for launching the General Assembly's *Nuclear Security Plan for 2006-2009* (2006). The Republic of Iraq will cooperate fully with all states in the hopes that the world will never bear witness to the nuclear attacks of non-state entities.