

# THE CONSULTATIONS IN GLION AND GENEVA: TIMELINE (2010-2015)\*



MIDDLE EAST WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION FREE ZONE SERIES

**2010**  
MAY

The consensus [final document](#) adopted at the 2010 Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference (RevCon) requested the Secretary-General of the United Nations (UN) and the co-sponsors of the [1995 NPT Middle East Resolution](#) in consultation with the states of the region to 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; the United Nations Secretary-General (UNSG) and the co-sponsors of the 1995 Resolution will appoint in consultation with the states of the region a Facilitator and a host Government for the 2012 Conference, with a mandate to support implementation of the 1995 Resolution by conducting consultations with the states of the region.

**2010**  
28 MAY

After the [final document](#) was adopted by consensus, in its [closing statement](#) the United States (US) objected to the paragraph in the final document which reaffirmed the "importance of Israel's accession to the Treaty and the placement of all its nuclear facilities under comprehensive IAEA safeguards". The US stated it deeply regrets that the final document "singles out Israel in the Middle East section". Because of this, the US noted that while it continues to be committed to the Middle East Weapons of Mass Destruction-Free Zone (ME WMDFFZ) objective and idea, its ability to deliver on its commitment to work with the countries in the region to create conditions for a successful conference "has been seriously jeopardized".

In a [statement](#), James Jones, US national security adviser, said that the US "will not permit a conference or actions that could jeopardize Israel's national security" and "will ensure that a conference will only take place if and when all countries feel confident that they can attend".

\* Between 2013-2014, representatives from Arab states, Iran, and Israel participated in face-to-face meetings to discuss convening the Middle East Weapons of Mass Destruction Free Zone (ME WMDFFZ) Conference, which was mandated by the 2010 Review Conference for the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. The meetings were mainly held in Glion and Geneva, Switzerland, and were facilitated by Ambassador Jaakko Laajava of Finland, with the Russian Federation, United Kingdom, and the United States, as well as the Secretary-General of the United Nations, serving as the co-conveners. It was the first time since the 1990s that states of the region discussed this issue face-to-face. This timeline documents the main events that led to and took place during these consultations, including links to original documents from this period.



- 2010**  
16 SEPTEMBER
- The Council of Arab Ministers for Foreign Affairs adopted [resolution 7243](#) establishing a Senior Officials Committee (SOC) which would report the League of Arab States (LAS) Council of Arab Foreign Ministers on the preparation for the Arab participation in 2012 ME WMD/FZ conference. The resolution also called for the coordination of the Arab position at the 54th International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) General Conference.
- 2011**  
2 JANUARY
- In a [letter](#) the LAS Secretary-General Amer Moussa requested the UNSG, Ban Ki-moon an update on the progress on the recommendations made at the 2010 NPT RevCon to implement the 1995 Middle East Resolution including on the appointment of a Facilitator and host government for the upcoming 2012 Middle East WMD/FZ conference.
- 2011**  
2 MARCH
- In its [resolution 7318](#) the LAS adopted the recommendations of the SOC with regards to preparation for the 2012 ME WMD/FZ conference, as well as the recommendation of the Committee on monitoring Israeli nuclear activities that violate the NPT.
- 2011**  
15 MAY
- The Council of Arab Ministers for Foreign Affairs adopted [resolution 7362](#), which expresses deep concern over the failure to implement any of the practical steps on the Middle East adopted at the 2010 NPT RevCon and emphasizes the importance of appointing a Facilitator and host government for the 2012 Conference as soon as possible.
- 2011**  
21 JUNE
- The LAS Secretary-General, Amre Moussa, sent a [letter](#) to the Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, informing him of the recently adopted LAS Resolution 7362, which expressed deep concern of the Arab States over the failure to implement any of the practical steps on the Middle East adopted at the 2010 NPT RevCon and emphasizing the importance of appointing a Facilitator and host government for the 2012 Conference as soon as possible.
- 2011**  
21 JUNE
- The LAS Secretary-General, Amre Moussa, sent a [letter](#) to the to the UNSG, Ban Ki-moon, informing him of the recently adopted LAS Resolution 7362, which expressed disappointment at the slow progress since the adoption of the 2010 NPT RevCon Action Plan on the Middle East and the need to appoint a Facilitator urgently.
- 2011**  
13 SEPTEMBER
- The LAS Council of Arab Ministers for Foreign Affairs adopted a [resolution](#) affirming the UN Secretary General's role in the preparation for the 2012 ME WMD/FZ Conference and urging him and the co-conveners to intensify consultations to choose a Facilitator and a host government.
- 2011**  
23 SEPTEMBER
- The Arab Group refrained from submitting a draft resolution on "Israeli nuclear capabilities" at the 2011 IAEA General Conference. The LAS stated it was "a demonstration of its goodwill and because the submission of such a draft resolution might be used as a pretext for delay" of the 2012 ME WMD/FZ conference. Additionally, the decision was made as part of an understanding reached in connection with the convening of the [IAEA forum](#) on "Experience of Possible Relevance to the Creation of a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in the Middle East". The [draft resolution](#) was adopted in 2009 but was rejected (in 2010, and 2013-2015), or withdrawn since.
- 2011**  
14 OCTOBER
- A [joint statement](#) by the UNSG and the co-conveners named Finnish senior diplomat, Jaakko Laajava, as the Facilitator and Finland as the host government of the ME WMD-FZ Conference.

- 2011**  
21-22 NOVEMBER
- The IAEA organized a two-day [forum](#) to learn from the “Experience of Possible Relevance to the Creation of a Nuclear-Weapon-Free-Zone in the Middle East”. The forum looked, inter alia, at the regional contexts before a nuclear-weapon-free zone was established, and the theory and practice of establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone.
- 2012**  
29 MARCH
- In [resolution 557](#), the LAS Council welcomed the steps taken in preparation for the 2012 ME WMDFZ Conference, the efforts by the Facilitator to consult with the states, and warned if the conference failed the Arab states would have to take other measures to ensure their security.
- 2012**  
28 AUGUST
- The [Russian draft resolution](#) included language that acknowledged and strongly supported the planned 2012 ME WMDFZ Conference. In explaining its draft, Russia said that it would be useful to use the current session of the General Conference “as a forum to give a positive impetus” to the preparations and work of that conference by asking all the Middle Eastern member states to commit to attending it. Russia withdrew the draft resolution due to lack of support.
- 2012**  
23 NOVEMBER
- The US issued a [statement](#) announcing that the conference “cannot be convened because of present conditions in the Middle East and the fact that states in the region have not reached agreement on acceptable conditions for a conference.” The following day, Russia issued a [statement](#) saying that “a decision to postpone the Conference can be justified only if there is a clearly expressed consent of the countries of the Middle East and the dates for the Conference are fixed”. The United Kingdom’s Foreign Minister [commented](#) on the decision to postpone the conference by reaffirming his country’s support for holding the conference as soon as possible. The [UN Secretary-General](#) and the [Facilitator](#), and the [Non-Aligned Movement \(NAM\)](#) also issued separate statements regarding the postponement of the 2012 Conference. No alternative date was set.
- 2013**  
13 JANUARY
- The LAS Council of Foreign Ministers adopted a [resolution](#) describing the postponement of the 2012 ME WMDFZ Conference as a breach of obligations and rejected all justifications for the postponement. The decision also requested the SOC to work with the Facilitator on setting a new date as soon as possible.
- 2013**  
19 APRIL
- The Arab Group [working paper](#) at the 2013 NPT Preparatory Committee (PrepCom) set out its position of the postponement of the conference, its position on the Facilitator’s ‘non-paper’ on the organization of the conference, and conditions for engaging in further consultations.
- 2013**  
29 APRIL
- Jaakko Laajava delivered [remarks](#) and submitted a [report](#) to the 2013 NPT PrepCom outlining his efforts to facilitate the convening of the conference. He urged the regional parties to engage in the continued consultations he proposed.
- 2013**  
29 APRIL
- Hisham Badr, Egyptian Assistant Foreign Minister, led his delegation in a walkout of the 2013 NPT PrepCom in Geneva to protest the failure to convene the 2012 Conference on the ME WMDFZ.
- 2013**  
20 JUNE
- In a [letter](#) from the Facilitator, Jaakko Laajava recapped the meeting held in Cairo on the 12th of June 2013. The letter recounts the discussion on the setting up consultations with consideration of the criteria of the LAS and requests the continued engagement of Ambassador Wael Al Assad.

- 2013**  
21 JULY
- LAS Secretary-General, Nabil Elaraby, emphasized in a [letter](#) the Facilitator, Jaakko Laajava the LAS request that the proposed consultations fulfil four criteria, which would guarantee the success and seriousness of the consultations. Elaraby requested the Facilitator to provide his proposals to hold the conference in a formal paper.
- 2013**  
3 AUGUST
- In his letter, the Facilitator extended an invitation to [Israel](#), the [LAS Secretary-General](#) and the [Chairperson of LAS-SOC](#) to meet him and the co-conveners in Vienna on 16 August 2013 to discuss details of the planned preparatory consultations for convening the postponed 2012 Conference. According to the letter, the agenda for the preparatory consultations was "to build agreement on the Helsinki Conference, its agenda and modalities of organization, including the timing, structure, and working methods of the Conference as well as its rules of procedure." It also noted that all decisions would be by consensus. The first consultation was ultimately held in [Glion in October 2013](#). In [response](#) to the invitation, the LAS expressed surprise that Iran was not invited to the meeting and emphasized that the planned consultations should be held under UN auspices. The Facilitator's team met bilaterally and briefed Iranian officials on other occasions.
- 2013**  
16 AUGUST
- Regional representatives met with the co-conveners and Facilitator of the postponed 2012 Conference in Vienna on 16th of August 2013 to discuss and coordinate the informal consultations.
- 2013**  
3 SEPTEMBER
- Israel's [letter](#) to the Facilitator emphasizes that the consultations should be based on consensus and highlights the potential of such consultations to start a path of direct dialogue leading to a shared regional vision of a more secure Middle East.
- 2013**  
12 SEPTEMBER
- A [letter](#) by LAS Wael Al Assad and SOC Chair Amb Hisham Badr reaffirms position of the LAS on the implementation of the 2010 Action Plan and the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East. They expressed concern that there was no clear indication that the Arab criteria for the preparatory consultations were being considered. The LAS further reiterated the urgency of holding the 2012 2012 Conference as soon as possible.
- 2013**  
28 SEPTEMBER
- In his [speech](#) at the UN General Assembly, Foreign Minister Nabil Fahmy urged all Middle Eastern states as well as the five Security Council permanent members to formally state their support for a ME WMDFZ and for all states of the region to accede to WMD international conventions and to work towards holding the postponed 2012 ME WMDFZ Conference by the Spring of 2014. In response almost all LAS states sent letters to the UNSG in support of the Zone.
- 2013**  
21 OCTOBER:  
GLION 1
- Representatives of 11 Arab states, Iran, Israel, and the LAS participated in the first informal consultations convened by the Facilitator and the co-conveners in Glion, Switzerland. According to the Facilitator's [invitation letter](#), the purpose of the consultation was to continue discussions on the agenda and modalities for the ME WMDFZ Conference.
- 2013**  
13 NOVEMBER
- In [response](#) to the Facilitator's [invitation letter](#), the LAS SOC emphasized that it was disappointed with the "set up and parameters" of the first consultation in Glion but had decided to continue to "engage positively". The letter also emphasized that the SOC felt that the convening of the consultations as an "open meeting without an agenda or clear reference to and mandate stipulated in 2010 by the NPT Review Conference and 1995 Resolution, will lead to unfruitful discussions that go beyond the mandate." The SOC emphasized the need for the Facilitator to limit the consultation agenda to discussion on an agenda and modalities of the ME WMDFZ conference. In addition, the LAS requested the distribution of the Arab Group [working paper](#) at the 2013 NPT PrepCom that outlines the Arab position.

- 2013**  
25 NOVEMBER:  
GLION 2
- 16 Arab states, Israel, and the LAS participated in the second informal consultation on the ME WMDFZ Conference, which was held by the Facilitator and the co-convenors in Glion, Switzerland. The Facilitator presented an [informal paper](#) entitled "Sandra's list" containing a list of proposed substantive and organizational matters for the conference. The paper was rejected by some Arab participants as they viewed it as going beyond the Facilitator's mandate. Russia presented a [non-paper](#) on "Possible Elements of the Final Document" for the conference.
- 2014**  
4 FEBRUARY:  
GLION 3
- 16 Arab states, Israel, and the LAS participated in the consultations, which were convened by the Facilitator, the co-convenors, and the United Nations.
- 2014**  
14 MAY:  
GENEVA 1
- 16 Arab states, Israel, and the LAS participated in the consultations, which were convened by the Facilitator, the co-convenors, and the United Nations.
- 2014**  
24 JUNE:  
GENEVA 2
- 16 Arab states, Israel, and the LAS participated in the consultations, which were convened by the Facilitator, co-convenors, and United Nations. It was the last consultation to be held by the Facilitator. Israel submitted a non-paper on agenda and other modalities during this consultation.
- 2014**  
29 AUGUST
- US Secretary of State, John Kerry, emphasized in a [letter](#) to the LAS Secretary-General Nabil Elaraby that the US cannot impose decisions on Israel to attend the postponed 2012 Conference and urged the Arab Group to refrain from introducing the Israeli Nuclear Capabilities (INC) resolution at the IAEA General Conference so as not to negatively impact the ongoing consultations.
- 2014**  
15 SEPTEMBER
- In a [letter](#) to the LAS Secretary-General, the Facilitator, on behalf of the co-convenors, offered to arrange further consultations in Geneva with the aim of "narrowing remaining difference regarding arrangement for a Conference." The meeting did not take place.
- 2014**  
15 OCTOBER
- The Facilitator proposed smaller group consultations in Nicosia. In [response](#), former LAS Director of Disarmament, Wael Al Assad, inquired on the reason for the new format and venue. He informed the Facilitator that the LAS SOC had rejected the idea of a smaller group and reiterated their position that the terms of reference to the 2010 NPT RevCon mandate and 1995 Middle East Resolution should be strictly observed. Finally, the LAS SOC inquired why Iran was not invited to the new format. The Facilitator [responded](#) that the proposed "smaller group discussions, followed by a meeting of the larger group, were not intended to limit the participation of any states, but represent a common and widely used diplomatic method to reach agreement on difficult issues." He agreed that Iran must remain involved. The meeting did not take place.
- 2014**  
2 NOVEMBER
- The Facilitator [wrote](#) to the chairman of the LAS SOC inviting representatives of all regional states to an informal meeting in Geneva "focus[ed] on the preparations of the Helsinki Conference including its agenda, modalities, elements for a concluding document and timing, in order to facilitate consensus among the states of the region on arrangements for the Conference itself." The SOC [declined](#) the invitation to attend the consultations planned for 2-3 November due to its inability to meet on short notice and make a decision on Arab states' participation. In a [letter](#), the SOC communicated to the Facilitator that the committee had decided to have "further discussions." After they discussed the Facilitator's proposals, the SOC chairman [informed](#) the Facilitator that Arab states would participate on the basis of the working paper they submitted in 2012 and requested him to provide the SOC with the positions of Iran and Israel on that working paper.

**2014**  
30 NOVEMBER

The Facilitator met with the LAS Secretary-General in Cairo to discuss preparations for the ME WMDFZ Conference. Jaakko Laajava presented Nabil Elaraby with the latest “Orientation Paper”, including a draft agenda, concluding document, rules of procedure, modalities, and programmes.

**2015**  
25 JANUARY

The Facilitator and the co-convenors invited the regional states to a drafting session to be held in Geneva to “address outstanding issues and seek agreement on the modalities for the Conference.” In his [invitation letter](#) to the LAS, the Facilitator informed the LAS of Israel’s willingness to attend the Conference as the agenda and modalities were agreed (Israel sent letters to Jaakko Laajava on 20 Jan 2015 and 1 Feb 2015). In response to the invitation, LAS SOC informed the Facilitator that the Arab states would not attend the drafting session in Geneva on 25-26 Jan 2015 due to the limited time between the proposed meeting and SOC meeting and requested to be consulted prior to setting any further dates. The SOC also informed the Facilitator that upon review of the orientations paper, it found that it did not meet the requirements Arab states had outlined in their working paper at the 2013 NPT PrepCom and reaffirming that this remained the position of the SOC. The Facilitator [wrote](#) to the SOC inquiring about suitable dates and proposed further consultation in Cairo prior to the drafting session. The SOC [responded](#) that it was only willing to participate in the proposed drafting session in Geneva if it was held under the UN auspices and in line with the 1995 Middle East Resolution and 2010 NPT RevCon mandate.

**2015**  
19 APRIL

The Facilitator invited regional states to a meeting in Geneva and inquiring if a post-NPT RevCon date would be suitable if the proposed April date was not. The Facilitator [assured](#) the LAS SOC that Israel was also willing to participate once a suitable date was agreed upon. The SOC [informed](#) the Facilitator that given the proximity of the 2015 NPT RevCon, the Arabs would engage on the ME WMDFZ in that forum.

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