Statement by the Islamic Republic of Iran
in the Thematic Discussion on Other Weapons of Mass Destruction
at 64th UNGA First Committee

New York, 16 October 2009

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation would like to associate itself with the statement made by the distinguished representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement on this thematic discussion.

The use of inhumane chemical weapons has a long dark history. The worst case was the cruel chemical attacks launched by the regime of Saddam Hussein against Iranians and the people of Halabche in Iraq. No nation has suffered more from chemical weapons than the Iranian people. With its tens of thousands victims, my country has been witnessing the sufferings of these innocent people while having to shoulder the burden of alleviating their painful plight single-handedly.

This bitter experience has become a determining factor in the national security strategy of the Islamic Republic of Iran to renounce any types of Weapons of Mass Destruction, and in our unshakable resolve to pursue the realization of the goal of a world free from WMD.

In this context, we played a significant role in the course of negotiations of the CWC and successfully implemented our obligations under the CWC and fully cooperated with the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), demonstrating our accountability for that purpose to the international community.

Iran justly expects the other States Parties, in particular the possessors to remain accountable with regard to their obligations and to destroy all their existing chemical weapons within the deadline provided by the Convention. The Non-Aligned Movement has already expressed its concern over the delay indicated by a major possessor State Party that it would not comply with its obligation for completion of destruction activities within the final extended deadline adopted by the decision of the Conference (doc C-11DEC, 17, dated 8 December 2006). All State Parties should comply with all their obligations under the convention in order to uphold the convention’s integrity and credibility. We call upon this major possessor State Party to make every effort necessary to meet its final extended deadline for destruction.

The chemical weapons threat is dangerously real. To rid the world of this threat, and to materialize in full the purpose and object of the CWC, we need also to ensure the universality of the CWC. Regrettably, the situation of the adherence to the CWC in the Middle East region is not promising due to refusal of one possessor of WMD, to submit itself to any type of international monitoring. It continues to be the only obstacle in the
establishment of a zone free from weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. As long as this regime continues to develop nuclear, biological and chemical weapons in its secret facilities with impunity, there is no prospect for the universality of the CWC in our region as well.

Mr. Chairman,

The integrity of the Convention and its full and non-discriminatory implementation, in particular article XI of the treaty are of outmost importance. The Convention is integrated as a whole whose provisions are mutually reinforcing. It is impossible to overlook any one segment without undermining the whole Convention. The continuation of the non-transparent exclusive export control regimes has already damaged the Convention. It is fundamental to ensure the removal of and prevent the imposition of any discriminatory restriction on access to materials, equipment and technology by developing States Parties to the Convention for their continued and peaceful development.

We reiterate our position that bringing to the justice the culprits who supported the use of chemical weapons by Saddam's regime against Iranians and Iraqis is necessary. A number of countries, including some EU member States assisted Saddam to develop chemical weapons and provided him with materials and precursors. Some of them financially and through banking systems supported his WMD programme all of which are well-documented. Those countries are responsible for killing and disabling of tens of thousands of innocent people. They should take measures to bring the perpetrators to justice and compensate the harms and casualties incurred as a result of their irresponsible actions. The OPCW and the CWC States Parties should address seriously and responsibly this issue.

On the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), we are of the view that the effective contribution of the Convention to international and regional peace and security would be enhanced through universal adherence to the Convention. We strongly believe that due to the high importance of Article X as the main pillar of the BWC, the facilitation of and participation in the fullest possible exchanges and enhanced international cooperation in the field of peaceful biotechnological activities, aimed at economic and social development, is the fundamental element in strengthening the implementation of the Convention. In this regard, the full and comprehensive implementation of Article X on an equal and non-discriminatory basis, especially in the light of recent scientific and technological developments in the field of biotechnology (biology), which increase the potential for cooperation amongst States Parties, should be underlined. I thank you