Islamic Republic of

IRAN

Permanent Mission to the United Nations

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Statement by H.E. Ambassador Eshagh Al Habib
Deputy Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations
Before the First Committee of the United Nations General Assembly
On all disarmament and international security agenda items
New York, 15 October, 2012

In the Name of God, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful

Mr. Chairman,
At the outset I would like to express my sincere felicitation to you and other members of the bureau on your well-deserved election.

I am fully confident that your wise and able leadership and vast diplomatic experience in the field of disarmament will lead the Committee towards a successful conclusion.

I assure you of the fullest cooperation of my delegation and wish you all success.

The Islamic Republic of Iran fully associates itself with the statement made on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement at the beginning of general debate.

Mr. Chairman,
The very existence of nuclear weapons is still the gravest threat to the international peace and security.

Yet, the adoption, in recent years, of nuclear posture reviews by a certain nuclear-weapon State and a military alliance which justify the use and threat of use of such weapons have further aggravated the situation.

Furthermore, the continued allocation, by a certain nuclear-weapon State, of billions of dollars to modernize nuclear weapons, sharing such weapons with other States and deploying them in other territories, as non-compliance cases of the NPT, are yet other factors that further intensify the already tense international security environment.
Indeed, not only the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, but also mere possession, sharing, deployment and modernization of such weapons run counter to the principles, rules and regulations of international law.

Accordingly, such cases of non-compliance with clear legal obligations and unequivocal commitments undertaken at the successive NPT Review Conferences have to come to an end.

Indeed, a country like the United States which, among other things, conducted the first ever and the most nuclear test explosions, the only one used nuclear weapons and possesses one of the largest nuclear arsenals and still is allocating billions of dollars to modernize its nuclear weapons, and in its Nuclear Posture Review it threatened to use nuclear weapons against some NPT States Parties, shall fully comply with all its legal obligations, including under article VI of the NPT.

With no doubt, the only absolute guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is their total elimination and the only safer world, as a longstanding goal of all nations, is a world free from nuclear weapons.

In our view, to rid the world of the dangers posed to international peace and security and the very survival of humankind by the existence of thousands of nuclear weapons and their possible deliberate or accidental use, is not an option, but an imperative.

To materialize this noble goal, not only all of us have to strive individually and collectively, but in fact the nuclear-weapon States have the primary responsibility.

Some believe that the goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world “will not be reached quickly” and “perhaps not in [their] lifetime”, and for that reason, they call for patience. But because of a possible deliberate or accidental use even tomorrow is very late.

They have to be aware that after almost seven decades of constant calls by all nations for the total elimination of nuclear weapons, which were responded by merely some symbolic measures, the nations lost their patience and believe only in deeds.

That is why that all nations call upon the nuclear-weapon States to stop rhetoric, end vague remarks, and start adopting practical measures to fulfill their nuclear disarmament obligations.

Those generations who has witnessed the horrible consequences of the use of nuclear weapons in Hiroshima and Nagasaki strongly calls for the realization of a nuclear-weapon-free world as soon as possible and in their lifetime, not later.

Limited bilateral or unilateral decommissioning of some deployed nuclear warheads are far below the expectations of the nations for the total elimination of nuclear weapons and can not substitute the explicit legal obligations of the nuclear-weapon States for the complete elimination of all their nuclear arsenals.

Along with the overwhelming majority of Member States, the Islamic Republic of Iran strongly supports the conclusion of a nuclear weapons convention, as a legal framework for the total elimination of nuclear weapons within a specified timeline with the deadline of 2025 and to prohibit the development, production, acquisition, testing, stockpiling, transfer, use or threat of use of such weapons, and to provide for their destruction.
Mr. Chairman,

Vertical and horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons is also a serious source of threat to the international peace and security.

The Islamic Republic of Iran believes that the best way to stop this trend is full and non-selective implementation of the NPT, and ensuring its universality, in particular in the Middle East, where the clandestine nuclear weapons program of the only non-NPT party in the region, which has been originally assisted by France, seriously threatens regional and international peace and security.

To overcome the threat of nuclear weapons in the region, Iran proposed the establishment of a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in the Middle East in 1974, but efforts to establish such a zone have not yet succeeded due to the persistent refusal of the Zionist regime to join the NPT and to place its concealed nuclear facilities under the IAEA Safeguards.

Iran strongly calls for the immediate implementation of the 1995 NPT Resolution on the Middle East and in this context, believes that there should be extreme international pressure on the Zionist regime, particularly in the upcoming 2012 conference, to force it to accede to the NPT, as a non-nuclear-weapon party, without any condition and further delay and place promptly all its underground nuclear facilities under the IAEA comprehensive safeguards, in order to remove the only impediment in the way of the long-sought-after goal of the establishment of a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in the Middle East.

Mr. Chairman,

While noting the successful conclusion of the first session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 NPT Review Conference, Iran believes that, in addition to its universality, the continued relevance, credibility and effectiveness of the Treaty is dependent completely upon its full and non-selective implementation.

Certain nuclear-weapon States who pretend to be the advocates of the NPT have to be aware that Treaty's relevance and credibility has severely been challenged as a result of their clear non-compliance with their obligations under the Treaty, in particular its Articles VI.

Concerning the Biological Weapons Convention, while welcoming the successful conclusion of its 7th Review Conference, my delegation stresses on the full, comprehensive and effective implementation of the Convention as well as its universalization.

Likewise, Iran still attaches particular importance to strengthening the Convention through multilateral negotiations for a non-discriminatory legally-binding protocol and urges the only State Party rejecting the resumption of the negotiations for such a protocol, to reconsider its policy towards this Convention in the light of persistent request by all other parties.

As a victim of chemical weapons used by Saddam’s army with the support of certain western countries, Iran considers the non-compliance of major possessor State Parties with the 2012 final extended deadline for the total destruction of their chemical weapons as a setback in the operation of the Convention which seriously challenges its relevance and credibility.

As a State Party to all international instrument banning weapons of mass destruction, the Islamic Republic of Iran attaches great importance to the inalienable rights of States Parties to acquire and have non-discriminatory access to material, equipment and technology for
peaceful purposes in all fields and in this regard underlines the importance of full and non-discriminatory implementation of the relevant provisions and plans within the context of the NPT as well as the Biological and Chemical Weapons Conventions.

Mr. Chairman,

In our view, the failure of the 2012 United Nations Conferences on the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) was due to its procedural and substantive difficulties.

Procedurally, the Conference did not have a "real negotiations nature" and the draft text presented by its President, was merely "his recollections" of the "discussions" during and prior to the Conference.

Likewise, substantively, some critical elements such as exemptions and loopholes in the text created for the sake of only one State to give it immunity for transferring any weapons under the pretext of military alliances or to deploy any weapon in other countries, which clearly run counter to the very goal of an Arms Trade Treaty.

Thus, to hold another ATT Conference would be a futile exercise if the procedures would be the same and equal treatment with all proposals as well as the security rights and interests of Member States could not be ensured.

Contrary to the ATT Conference, the Second United Nations Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects held in 2012 was successful in having a final document and despite some deficiencies in the outcome, its overall work under its able President, Ambassador Ogwu of Nigeria, was a step forward towards the full and effective implementation of Program of Action.

We attach great importance to the full and effective implementation of the PoA and International Tracing Instrument in particular in the areas related to the international cooperation and assistance.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion, I reiterate that like other States party to the NPT, my country has an inalienable right to peaceful uses of nuclear energy and technology, including a sovereign right to develop a full national nuclear fuel cycle. Iran is determined to exercise this right, and in doing so, it takes its responsibilities seriously.

Contrary to the baseless allegations made by few countries in this room, Iran's nuclear activities are, and have always been exclusively for peaceful purposes and despite all external political pressure on the IAEA, the Agency has repeatedly confirmed the non-diversion of declared nuclear materials in Iran.

The Islamic Republic Iran has always demonstrated its readiness to negotiations without preconditions and reiterates its willingness to engage in a serious and constructive negotiation, based on justice and mutual respect.

It is up to the other parties to change their failed policy of coercion and intimidation and to demonstrate their goodwill by coming back to the real negotiation and cooperation.

I thank you Mr. Chairman.