Statement by:
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before
General Assembly Plenary Meeting to Promote the International Day
for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons

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

Mr. President,

I would like to thank you for convening this meeting and for your statement. I also wish to associate my delegation with the statement delivered by the distinguished representative of Venezuela, on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The primary aim of the United Nations is the achievement and maintenance of a reliable and lasting peace and security in the world and the establishment of international relations based on peaceful coexistence and trust between all States. Nuclear weapons constitute a big impediment to progress towards this aim because their mere existence is a source of threat, distrust and discord.

The profound concern of peoples and their Governments throughout the world about the threat of nuclear weapons is a legitimate and necessary concern. The existing arsenals of such weapons are capable of destroying all life and civilization on earth.

The 2013 decision of the General Assembly to convene this high-level meeting every year on 26 of September to cherish and promote the lofty goal of total elimination of nuclear weapons and the emergence of powerful humanitarian initiative to legally ban the use of nuclear weapons are clear indications that not only the 71-year old global demand for nuclear disarmament is not declined, but, quite the opposite, it has severely been heightened in the recent years.
All of us have to redouble our efforts to advance the goal of nuclear disarmament. Effective collective measures are required, as called for in Article I of the UN Charter, for the removal of nuclear threat to peace and security. The process of nuclear disarmament must involve participation of all States. However, nuclear-weapon States that actually possess such weapons have the special responsibility and legal obligation for accomplishment of total elimination of all nuclear weapons.

Yet there is no progress in fulfilling nuclear disarmament obligations under Article VI of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), namely pursuing and bringing to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control. Certain nuclear-weapon States continue to oppose any proposal and initiative regarding the commencement of multilateral negotiations on nuclear disarmament, particularly in the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva.

The lack of substantive progress in the implementation of the 1995 resolution and decisions, the 13 practical steps and the 2010 action plan on nuclear disarmament are other examples which have deepened the already existing frustration of the non-nuclear-weapon States.

Moreover, in some nuclear-weapon States huge budgets are being devoted to qualitative refinements of their nuclear arsenals and development of new types of nuclear weapons in contravention of their legal obligations under Article VI of the NPT and the object and purpose of the CTBT.

These negative trends and developments have prompted deep concern over the future of nuclear disarmament and growing division between non-nuclear-weapon States and nuclear-weapon States.

The predicament that we face today in the field of nuclear disarmament must change. Change must begin in attitudes and assumptions of those that seek security through nuclear deterrence and retaining weapons of mass destruction.

Non-nuclear-weapon States have been steadfast on their non-proliferation commitment. They strongly expect nuclear-weapon States to unreservedly comply with their nuclear disarmament obligations. Pacta sunt servanda. Agreements must be kept. Nuclear disarmament must not await the settlement of all disputes between nuclear powers. Compliance with nuclear disarmament commitments must not be conditional.

The existing step-by-step approach to nuclear disarmament is not working. This verdict is based on relevant facts during last twenty years. The magnitude of what remains to be done dwarfs minimum and reversible steps taken within this approach. Its limitations are more apparent than before. It has failed to deliver its promises and has brought us to the unfortunate circumstances of today, in which there are still thousands of nuclear weapons that threaten to annihilate humanity by accident or miscalculation or by madness.
We believe one of the most effective and practical way to achieve the complete abolition of nuclear weapons within a specified timeframe and sustain a world free of nuclear weapons is to commence negotiation on and bring to conclusion a comprehensive nuclear weapons convention.

Historical facts attest that similar comprehensive approaches were successful in bringing about the elimination of the whole categories of biological and chemical weapons; something that initially looked unfeasible and very ambitious, but finally achieved due to mustered genuine political will. The Islamic Republic of Iran fully supports the Non-Aligned Movement’s proposal to commence negotiation on a comprehensive nuclear weapons convention in the Conference on Disarmament. We have registered our views in detail regarding the main elements of such a convention in the document A/71/131.

Mr. President,

Total elimination of nuclear weapons is a vital undertaking, all the more so because the consequences of inaction can be global catastrophe. Nuclear weapons must be abolished before they abolish humanity and civilization. Our dedication and hope to pursuing the objective of nuclear disarmament must be maintained and strengthened.

The Islamic Republic of Iran continues to actively engage in all international diplomatic and legal efforts to save humanity from the menace of nuclear weapons and their proliferation, including through the establishment of nuclear weapons free zones, particularly in the Middle East. The establishment of such a zone in the region of the Middle East has been an important objective and priority for Iran as well as all other peace-loving nations in our region.