STATEMENT

By

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Review Conference of the States Parties to the Treaty on
the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

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Check Against Delivery
Mr. Chairman,

Let me congratulate you on your assumption of the chairmanship of this second preparatory committee of the NPT 2005 Review Conference. I am sure that your diplomatic skills and experience will best guide our discussions towards the contributions to the recommendations of the third preparatory committee.

Mr. Chairman,

While fully associating with the statement delivered by the distinguished ambassador of Malaysia on behalf of the members of the Non-Aligned Movement parties to the NPT, I would like to make the following statement.

Since we met last year there have been several positive and negative developments worth taking note of. The most welcome event has been the decision by Cuba to become a State Party to the NPT and the Tlatelolco Treaty. We also welcome the endeavours of the five central Asian States to establish a nuclear weapon free zone in that region and hope these events will harbinger the total universality of the Treaty and the establishment of a nuclear weapon - or rather weapons of mass destruction - free zone in the Middle East. On the other hand we also had the decision by the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea to withdraw from the NPT. We hope the dialogue initiated in Beijing will provide the opportunity to have DPRK within the NPT family again.
Mr. Chairman,

The mandate of the second Prepcom, as part of the review process of the NPT, is to consider specific matters of substance relating to the implementation of the Treaty and the Decisions and the Resolution adopted in 1995 and the outcomes of the subsequent Review Conferences including developments affecting the operation and purposes of the treaty as well as, of course, procedural issues. This will provide us with another opportunity to deal with international security policy and focus on the role of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in enhancing international peace and security.

Due to critical developments which have occurred during the past two years, the international security environment has gone through deep changes and new formidable challenges have emerged, which need to be addressed. Chief among them is the militarization of this environment. While we were optimistic that military elements would find a diminishing role in the security policy of states, the events following 9/11 including the military operation in Afghanistan, have expanded the presence of foreign military forces in some sensitive areas of the world, particularly in the Persian Gulf region. Such events together with the most important one, the recent war in Iraq have undermined that optimism and led to an unprecedented militarization of the international security environment in recent years. Today, we are concerned that the predominance of the military element over the international security environment may undermine, if not ruin, the achievements of the 1990's that focused on international standard setting in a multilateral context. The negative repercussions of this challenge for the
international system are of great concern particularly in this climate of seemingly convenient unilateralism.

A very historical proven fact is that while militarization is becoming predominant over international relations, the threat posed by the existence, acquiring and accumulation of nuclear weapons to the very foundation of peaceful relations among nations will increase more than ever. During the time characterized by militarization, the need to stick to the principle of disarmament and arms control and to protect the past achievements is more important than ever. In such a climate, the consequences of any negative developments and setbacks in achieving the goal of general and complete disarmament will severely threaten peace and stability in the world.

The international community still considers the existence of nuclear weapons and their possible use or threat of use as the most serious threat to the very existence of humankind and civilisation, however some developments and setbacks have occurred since the 2000 Review Conference and the last Prepcom. The emergence of a new security doctrine that set rationale for possible use of nuclear weapons is among those developments. This doctrine relies on nuclear weapons, for the foreseeable future, as a key element in the national security strategy of a nuclear power. The new approaches towards nuclear weapons stress capabilities to respond to conventional and non-nuclear threats, which should serve as a credible deterrent at the lowest level of nuclear weapons consistent with the security interest of that nuclear power. Ignoring the widespread protest against its nuclear doctrines, in its National Security Strategy released in September 2002, it asserts that it "has long maintained the option of pre-emptive
actions to counter a sufficient threat” to its national security and that it will, if necessary, act pre-emptively “to forestall or prevent hostile acts by its adversaries”. Furthermore, the development and deployment of anti-ballistic missiles defence systems, the pursuit of advanced military technologies capable of deployment in outer space and the unilateral withdrawal from the ABM, have intensified the further militarization of the international security environment, threaten the strategic stability in the world and put the arms control and disarmament efforts at peril.

It is time to stick to the principles of disarmament and to protect past collective achievements. We, as a matter of principle, are strongly of the view that the only way to counter challenges that emanate from the existence of nuclear arsenals of the nuclear powers and the proliferation of nuclear weapons is to strengthen the relevant international instruments through multilateral, comprehensive and non-discriminatory efforts. We firmly believe that the NPT is the cornerstone of the international efforts to achieve complete nuclear disarmament and to halt vertical and horizontal proliferation of this horrible weapon.

Scrutiny of the non-proliferation record of the NPT substantiates the assertion that the Treaty has a successful record in halting proliferation of nuclear weapons. During the past three decades of its existence only two cases of non-compliance have been registered to this effect. In other words, the credit goes to non-nuclear weapon state parties that have stuck to the principles and objectives of the NPT and complied with the obligation of not acquiring nuclear weapons capabilities and, as a result, enabling the NPT to register such a successful record in the field of non-proliferation.
On the contrary, due to the reluctance of some nuclear weapon states, the disarmament objectives of the NPT have not materialized in spite of their clear obligations and the continuous calls of the international community. Nuclear disarmament is still the highest priority in the security agenda of the international community. A review of the past shows a lack of progress by the nuclear powers to accomplish the elimination of their nuclear arsenals leading to nuclear disarmament.

By the adoption of 13 practical steps for systematic and progressive efforts to implement Article VI of the NPT and the related paragraph of the 1995 Decision on "Principles and Objectives for Nuclear and non-Proliferation and Disarmament", including an unequivocal undertaking of nuclear powers to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals, the 2000 Review Conference gave fresh hope that the collective efforts of the international community were moving forward in the right direction. However, the actions and measures taken by the nuclear powers were far from the expectation of the international community that the 2000 Review Conference would lead to the fulfilment of the noble goal of nuclear disarmament. The picture of nuclear disarmament over the past two years has been one of setbacks and negative developments.

The current Prepcom should substantially deal with nuclear disarmament to find the best way to materialize the welcomed outcomes of the 2000 Review conference and in particular the parts related to nuclear disarmament. In the light of the current developments the convening of an international conference to identify ways and means of eliminating nuclear
danger, as requested by our Heads of States and Governments in the United Nations Millennium Declaration will bring us one step closer to achieving nuclear disarmament.

Realizing the universality of the NPT is an urgent need to enhance security and stability in the world. In light of the current developments, the Middle East, as one of the most sensitive areas, deserves more attention and substantial work during the current meeting. We vividly recall that the Resolution on the Middle East adopted in the 1995 Review and Extension Conference was an integral part of the decision for the indefinite extension of the NPT. Now the sole obstacle for the establishment of a nuclear weapon free zone in the region is Israel, which has not yet joined the NPT and has not placed its nuclear facilities under the comprehensive safeguards of the IAEA. All members of the NPT and specifically those who have influence on this regime should exert far more pressure on it to join the NPT and renounce its security policy based on WMD and in particular nuclear weapons.

Article IV has a critical role to play in full and indiscriminate implementation of the NPT. Its goal is to strike a balance between the security concerns and the socio-economic requirements for development especially for the developing countries. By establishing a framework to promote the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, through enhancing international cooperation among state parties, it provides the main incentive set forth in the treaty. Considering the experience with Iraq concerning its circumvention of the rules of the NPT and IAEA safeguards, we do recognize that keeping such balance is a challenge. However, stressing only
the security aspect of disarmament treaties including the NPT, and hampering the materialization of recognized inalienable rights of state parties to engage in peaceful uses of nuclear energy would be a disservice to the principles and objectives of the Treaty.

The NPT constitutes an integrated structure, whose effectiveness and realizations of its noble goals lie in full compliance with all its provisions by all Parties. The credibility of the NPT as the most encompassing disarmament treaty would be impaired through selective and discriminatory approaches towards its implementation.

Let me also recall that the security of peaceful nuclear facilities has been guaranteed through the NPT 1995 Review and Extension Conference Decision on Principles and Objectives. The package of decisions and resolutions adopted in 1995 do form an integral part of the package leading to the indefinite extension of NPT. Any use or threat of use of force against peaceful nuclear facilities of members of the NPT, would "jeopardize nuclear safety and raise serious concerns regarding the application of international law on the use of force in such cases, which could warrant appropriate action in accordance with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations". We believe the Review Process should also duly engage with all aspects of peaceful use of nuclear energy and security of peaceful facilities under the IAEA safeguards.

Mr. Chairman,

The NPT 2000 Review Conference concluded that "Legally binding
security assurances by the five Nuclear Weapon States to the non-nuclear-weapon states parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapon strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation regime...”

Since there is seemingly a long way, due to the slow pace of progress towards nuclear disarmament, to the total elimination of such horrible weapons, providing security assurances to Non-Nuclear State Parties to the NPT, by nuclear powers, against any uses or threat of use of nuclear weapons is a crucial step toward the strengthening of the Treaty. Therefore, the Prepcom should also focus on this matter and highlight the necessity of the conclusion of a universal, unconditional and legally binding instrument warranting such assurances.

The IAEA safeguards system is a main pillar of the NPT’s non-proliferation regime. The 2000 Review Conference considered that the comprehensive safeguards provide assurances that states are complying with their undertakings under relevant safeguards agreements. The Conference has also stressed the consolidation and strengthening of the IAEA safeguards as a main objective for the non-proliferation regime. The achievement of the universality of the comprehensive safeguards, in particular in the sensitive areas of the world, should be considered as the most urgent need for consolidation of the NPT’s structure and security of non-nuclear weapon parties. Any international effort to strengthen the comprehensive safeguards would definitely be of much more effect if it considers the universality of the safeguards of the same importance and endeavours to achieve both together.
Mr. Chairman,

Before concluding I would like to say a few words with respect to some references made to my country’s peaceful nuclear program.

Iran as a founding member of the NPT is more than fully committed to all its obligations under the Treaty and is in the meantime determined to vigorously exploit its inalienable right to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

In its attempt to develop its indigenous peaceful nuclear capability Iran has been in constant cooperation with the IAEA and has fully complied with its obligations under its safeguards agreements. This cooperation has advanced in parallel with the progress in developing our national peaceful capabilities. The IAEA is fully briefed of our long term plans.

Let me reiterate here in a solemn way that, unlike some others, we consider the acquiring, development and use of nuclear weapons inhuman, immoral, illegal and against our very basic principles. They have no place in Iran’s defence doctrine. They do not add to our security nor do they help us to rid the Middle East of weapons of mass destruction, which is in our supreme interests. We have no hidden agenda and do not seek nuclear weapons, and most certainly we do not accept or tolerate allegations by those who have clearly placed themselves outside the law.

Iranians know that more capability necessarily prompts more responsibility. We would prove that accountability is part and parcel of our
quest for full nuclear technology for peaceful purposes. We are enforcing our national laws and regulations on the control of nuclear and radioactive material and equipments. We welcome any constructive interaction with other parties including the Nuclear Supplier Group.

The NPT 2000 Review Conference reaffirmed that "IAEA is the competent authority responsible for verifying and assuring, in accordance with the statute of IAEA and the IAEA safeguards system, compliance with its safeguards agreements with States parties undertaken in fulfilment of their obligations under article III, paragraph 1, of the Treaty, with a view to preventing diversion of nuclear energy from peaceful uses to nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices" and we believe that the IAEA provides the only appropriate mechanism to address any possible question or concern.

In reaction to the report recently submitted by the Director General of the IAEA, questions have been raised on detailed aspects of the Iranian peaceful projects at the Board of Governors. The DG is to report back in June. In the meantime we are providing substantiated information in great detail and with complete transparency to address the questions in order to reassure those states, who have raised them in good faith, of our full compliance.

We cannot however convince those who have other agendas in bringing subjects relevant to the IAEA, to this body. Are they trying to promote the NPT regime through undermining the NPT apparatus, which is designed to look into questions regarding compliance and which in fact at
this very time is conducting its task? What is the real reason to distort the needed focus of the NPT Prepcom from its main duty?

Let me ask some concrete questions: How many nuclear weapon states other than the United States have prescribed the use of nuclear weapons in conventional conflicts and developed new types of nuclear weapons compatible with its combat scenarios? None. Which other nuclear weapon states have named non-nuclear weapon states parties to the NPT as the targets of their nuclear weapons? None. Which other nuclear weapon states have sought to utilize outer space for nuclear purposes more than the United States? None. How many NPT nuclear weapon states other than the United States have legally rejected the CTBT and practically doomed its future? Why did the United States through its unilateral withdrawal from the ABM and its abrogation of step 7 of the 13 steps threaten the strategic stability of the world? Which NPT party other than the United States has left such a record of undermining so many international instruments, on disarmament and other issues alike? None.

Are these not the relevant questions that should be dealt with at this Prepcom and other NPT meetings?

Let's be examples for others by deeds, not words and polemic.

I thank you Mr. Chairman.