STATEDMENT ON SPECIFIC ISSUES: REGIONAL ISSUES, INCLUDING WITH RESPECT TO THE MIDDLE EAST AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 1995 MIDDLE EAST RESOLUTION, BY MR. BALCHANDRAN THARMAN ALTERNATE HEAD OF THE DELEGATION OF MALAYSIA TO THE SECOND PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR THE 2010 REVIEW CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE TREATY ON THE NON-PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS IN GENEVA, 5 MAY 2008

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation fully associates itself with the statement of the Non-Aligned Movement States Parties to the NPT.

Mr. Chairman,

2. Malaysia strongly believes that the establishment of Nuclear-Weapons-Free Zones are a critical step towards achieving general and complete nuclear disarmament. The establishment of such a Zone, especially in the Middle East, would constitute a major step to build confidence among governments and peoples of the region. In this regard, Malaysia underlines the importance of the Resolution on the Middle East, adopted at the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference. Malaysia recalls that the adoption of the Resolution was an essential component of the bargain struck at the 1995 Review Conference and significantly contributed to the decision of the States Parties for the indefinite extension of the Treaty.

3. Malaysia therefore calls upon all States in the Middle East to establish an effectively verifiable Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and their delivery systems. Malaysia also calls upon all States Parties to the NPT, and in particular the Nuclear Weapons States, to extend their cooperation and to exert their utmost efforts to ensure the establishment of a Nuclear-Weapons-Free Zone in the Middle East.
Mr. Chairman,

4. The international community has repeatedly called for the establishment of a Nuclear-Weapons-Free Zone in the Middle East, a call which has been enunciated not only within the context of the NPT since 1995, but also in the context of the United Nations, through the adoption of an annual resolution in the General Assembly since 1974 calling for the establishment of such a Zone. This reflects the recognition of the international community that the Middle East is a unique region, incomparable with the other regions of the world and as such the situation in the region needs urgent attention. Regrettably however, there has been little or no progress towards achieving a Nuclear-Weapons-Free Zone in the region.

5. Malaysia strongly believes that the establishment of a Nuclear-Weapons-Free Zone in the Middle East would significantly contribute towards enhancing regional peace, security and stability. We are concerned that the failure to realize a Nuclear-Weapons-Free Zone in the Middle East could provoke a nuclear arms race in the region, especially given the December 2006 admission by Israel of possessing nuclear weapons. Israel’s refusal to accede to the NPT is the major obstacle which continues to prevent the establishment of a Nuclear-Weapons-Free Zone in the region. We therefore call upon Israel to immediately accede to the NPT, and to place all its nuclear facilities under the comprehensive IAEA safeguards. The application of the full scope of IAEA safeguards to all of Israel’s nuclear facilities would not only contribute to the establishment of a Nuclear-Weapons-Free Zone in the Middle East, but also constitute a confidence building measure towards the attainment of a lasting peace in the region.

Mr. Chairman,

6. Malaysia is concerned over the growing non-compliance of the non-proliferation provisions of the NPT by certain States Parties. We have heard disturbing accounts of certain States Parties’ continued collaboration with Israel in nuclear science and technology which contributes to Israel’s nuclear weaponization programme. Malaysia believes that such collaborations are a gross violation of Article I of the Treaty. In this regard, Malaysia calls upon all NPT States Parties to reaffirm their commitment to implement all provisions in a balanced and non-discriminatory manner.

Mr. Chairman,

7. Malaysia believes that it is important that all States and international organizations remain actively engaged in genuine dialogue as well as undertake serious efforts with the concerned parties in resolving longstanding issues affecting the region, including the establishment of a Nuclear-Weapons-Free Zone in the Middle East.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.