STATEMENT BY THE INDONESIAN DELEGATION
AT THE THIRD SESSION OF THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE
FOR THE 2010 NPT REVIEW CONFERENCE
ON SPECIFIC ISSUES
(REGIONAL ISSUES, INCLUDING THE MIDDLE EAST)

Mr. Chairman,

It is widely recognized that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free-zone (NWFZ) contributes to strengthening global disarmament and non-proliferation regime. The members of the existing NWFZ should be more active in promoting the establishment of new zones in southern hemisphere, taking into account that NWFZ serves as an effective tool fence off entire regions of the world from nuclear weapons. It also provides as effective means for preventing nuclear tests from being conducted in a region.

NWFZ can also play an important role by helping foster broader regional cooperation and promoting confidence building among countries in the region that their neighbours are not pursuing nuclear weapons. Therefore, we welcome the entry into force of the Central Asia NWFZ as a positive step to achieve the objective of a world free of nuclear weapons. We also positively welcome the outcome of the Conference of States parties to NWFZ held in Tlatelolco in 2005 and look forward to the convening of a follow-up conference with a view to enhance cooperation and coordination among the existing NWFZ prior to the 2010 NPT Revcon.

In our region, the Bangkok Treaty which signified the establishment of South East Asia NWFZ has not been supported yet by the NWS. This is largely because the Protocol of Accession has not yet been finalized. We hope that States parties to the Treaty will continue their efforts to work with NWS to resolve some pending issues so that the SEANWFZ could be implemented as soon as possible.

Since the NPT entered into force, there are five NWFZ established covering more than 100 countries. All the regions of the world which have now been covered by the existing NWFZ are areas in which nuclear weapon does not exist. Other regions that have not yet covered by NWFZ are those regions that include NWS or border with them, namely South Asia, Northeast Asia, North America, Europe and the Middle East. Therefore, robust efforts need to be taken in order to expedite the process of establishing new NWFZ.

Mr. Chairman,
Among those regions, the Middle East is the most immediate region that requires more attention prior to the convening of the 2010 Revcon. The UN General Assembly has annually adopted resolutions calling for the establishment of a NWFZ in the Middle East. It has been more than thirty five years since the first resolution was adopted in 1974, a NWFZ in the Middle East has not yet been materialized.

Today, however, regional peace and stability in the Middle East continue to be uncertain. While the unresolved conflict between Israel and Palestine remained as the stumbling block to the process of establishing NWFZ in the Middle East, the Israel’s admittance of possessing nuclear weapons has become influencing factors on the need to establish such a zone.

Knowing the complexities of the issue, the process of establishing NWFZ should be done in incremental manner. But the crucial question is how to start the process toward regional nuclear disarmament, and may be eventually WMD disarmament. Taking into account the current situation in the region, the process of establishing NWFZ is a potential means to build a lasting peace and security.

Mr. Chairman,

Despite the political prospects for a NWFZ in the Middle East may seem far-fetched today, nothing in the region, particularly given its recent development and its unfolding ramifications, is beyond the realm of possibility. But to expedite the process and in order to move forward on the implementation of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East, Indonesia would like to propose the following for the consideration of this Prepcom and eventually at the 2010 Revcon.

There is a need to establish a “standing committee” or “standing bureau” of the NPT that would compose of the current Chairs of the Prepcoms and the President of the 2010 Revcon. We hope that the Revcon next year could give a special mandate or task to this so-called “standing committee/bureau” to initiate contacts or to engage in consultation with Israel, the NWS and other concerned NPT states parties in the region.

It is our hope that by opening direct contacts and consultation with countries concern, it would be the basis to find common ground to start negotiation on the principles and elements for the establishment of a NWFZ in the Middle East.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.