Statement by H.E. Mr. Reza Najafi
Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations and other International Organizations - Vienna
At the Third Session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
On Cluster I specific issue: Nuclear Disarmament and Security Assurances
New York, 2 May 2014

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

Mr. Chairman,

I would like to associate my delegation with the statement made by Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The continued existence of thousands of nuclear weapons in the stockpiles of the nuclear-weapon States and allocation of billions of dollars to modernize them has kept the fate of civilization and of humanity itself under horror and panic. Even with the conclusion of the NPT, humankind has continued to live under the shadow of possible use of the world’s most destructive mass-terror weapons. Therefore, the only absolute grantee against the threat or use of nuclear weapons as well as the risk of nuclear-weapon accidents is their total elimination.

However, pending the total elimination of nuclear weapons, international efforts should be focused on reducing, to the maximum extent, the possibility of the threat or use of nuclear weapons under any circumstances. To that end, there should be increased and expedited efforts aimed at de-alerting and de-targeting these weapons and reducing their deployment and operational status. Serious steps also should be taken to exclude entirely the role of nuclear weapons from all the military and security doctrines.
Additionally, pending the total elimination of nuclear weapons, all non-nuclear-weapon States Parties to the Treaty should effectively be assured against the use or threat of use of such weapons. This is of vital importance for the security of non-nuclear-weapon States. Therefore, parallel to the aforementioned practical measures, the efforts to provide the non-nuclear-weapon States with unconditional legal assurances should continue as a matter of high priority.

As a first step in this regard, in the early 1980s, all five nuclear-weapon States, in response to the international demands to receive unconditional and legally binding security assurances against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, accepted some qualified and conditional undertakings not to use such weapons against States Parties to the Treaty and those which have renounced the production and acquisition of such weapons.

In 1995 and just days before the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference, this pledge was reaffirmed through unilateral statements by the nuclear-weapon States. Those statements were taken note of by the Security Council resolution 984. The 1995 unilateral statements and the resolution 984 were duly taken into account by the 1995 Review and Extension Conference. Accordingly, its decision on principles and objectives stipulated that “further steps should be considered to assure nonnuclear-weapons States Parties to the Treaty against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. These steps could take the form of an internationally legally binding instrument”. The 1995 unilateral statements and the resolution 984 are inseparable parts of the deal in the 1995 NPT Review Conference.

Mr. Chairman,

We are of the firm belief that nuclear weapons should not imply political clout and capability to shape and influence world events or change the decisions of sovereign States. Holding onto and expanding nuclear arsenals should be condemned rather than condoned or tolerated. Any increase in nuclear capability, whether quantitatively or qualitatively, should equal a reduction in political credibility.

As long as such weapons are in the stockpiles of the nuclear-weapon States, no one on the earth has any security. It is therefore imperative to move on with a concerted and firm resolve to stop and reverse this fast-paced drive.

Receiving concrete legal negative security assurances is the right of non-nuclear-weapon States parties who, by becoming party to the Treaty, have given up the nuclear-weapon option. Indeed, they did so to live in a more secure world, not under the shadow of nuclear weapons.
To that end, efforts to provide unconditional legal assurance to non-nuclear-weapon States needs to be expedited as a matter of priority. In this context, the Preparatory Committee and the Review Conference should strongly supports the immediate commencement of negotiations on providing effective, universal, unconditional, non-discriminatory and irrevocable legally binding security assurances by all nuclear-weapon States to all non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the Treaty, against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons under all circumstances pending the realization of the goal of total elimination of nuclear weapons.

As a first step in this regard, the Preparatory Committee should recommend to the Review Conference the adoption of a decision through which the Conference “decides that the threat or use of nuclear weapons against any non-nuclear-weapon State Party to the Treaty is prohibited under all circumstances and thus illegal”. This is in strict accordance with the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice of 8 July 1996, as well numerous resolutions of the General Assembly.

I thank you Mr. Chairman.