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# Preparatory Committee for the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

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### The issue of negative security assurances

#### Working paper submitted by the Islamic Republic of Iran

1. Since the first atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945, with a destructive power 10,000 times larger than previous explosive devices, bombs a thousand times more destructive than fission bombs, i.e. thermonuclear bombs, have been designed and built. The continued existence of thousands of such bombs in the stockpiles of the nuclear powers has kept the fate of civilization and of humanity itself under horror and panic. Even with the conclusion of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, humankind has continued to live under the shadow of the possible use of the world's most destructive mass-terror weapons. Therefore, the question of the security of non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the Treaty against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons has been and still is an important and vital issue.

2. In the early 1980s, all five nuclear-weapon States, in response to international demands for a legally binding treaty on negative security assurances against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, as a first, limited step accepted some qualified undertakings not to use such weapons against States parties to the Treaty and those that had renounced the production and acquisition of such weapons. In early April 1995, this pledge was reaffirmed through unilateral statements by nuclear-weapon States, and on 11 April 1995, just days before the 1995 Review and Extension Conference, United Nations Security Council resolution 984 (1995) was adopted, taking note of these unilateral statements and recognizing "the legitimate interest of non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons to receive security assurances". The Security Council was also very explicit in "considering that the ... resolution constitutes a step in this direction".

3. The unilateral declarations of the nuclear-weapon States and the Security Council resolution were duly taken note of in a package of decisions by the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Principle 8 of the decision on principles and objectives for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament stipulated that "further steps should be considered to assure non-nuclear-weapon States party 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”.

4. Moreover, the new doctrines such as the United States Nuclear Posture Review, the development of easy-to-use mini-nukes and a recent increase in the number of cases in which some high officials of certain nuclear-weapon States have threatened non-nuclear-weapon States (such as those threats made by the President of France), all have put the non-nuclear-weapon States more than ever under the real threat of possible use of nuclear weapons.

5. The United States, through its development of new types of easy-to-use nuclear weapons and its naming of non-nuclear-weapon States as targets of such inhumane weaponry, is clearly violating its obligations under Article VI of the Treaty and putting its commitment to its 1995 unilateral statement under serious question. Hundreds of millions of dollars have already been allocated to nuclear weapon development projects such as the United Kingdom Trident or the United States mini-nukes and, recently, the addition of a nuclear-armed ballistic missile submarine to the French nuclear arsenal. The international community should not await the deployment, or even the threat of use, of such weapons to react. Such policies and practices seem to indicate that no lesson was learned from the nightmare of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. It is abhorrent that the threats and dangerous doctrine of the use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear States were officially proclaimed by the United States and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

6. The 1995 unilateral statements and the subsequent Security Council resolution are inseparable parts of the deal in the 1995 Review Conference, and the efforts to undermine multilateral achievement in the field of disarmament and other areas are now seriously undermining the very credibility of the Treaty.

7. Iran considers the total elimination of nuclear weapons as the only absolute guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. Nuclear weapons should not imply political clout and capability to shape and influence world events or change the decisions of sovereign States. Holding on and expanding nuclear arsenals should be condemned rather than condoned or tolerated. Any increase in nuclear capability should equal a reduction in political credibility. As long as such weapons are in the stockpiles of nuclear-weapon States, no one on 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. Certain nuclear-weapon States have tried to create smokescreens in international forums, including the Treaty review process, to deflect attention from their abysmal record and policies.

8. Pending the total elimination of these inhuman weapons, efforts for the conclusion of a universal, unconditional and legally binding instrument on security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States should be pursued as a matter of priority by the international community.

9. Therefore, we propose that the upcoming Conference establish an ad hoc committee to work on a draft of a legally binding instrument on the illegality of nuclear weapons and the provision of security assurances by the five nuclear-weapon States to non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the Treaty, and to submit the draft of the legal instrument to the next Review Conference for consideration and adoption. As a first step to address the twin issues of illegality of use and negative

security assurances, we believe that, as suggested by the community of non-governmental organizations, the 2010 Review Conference should adopt a decision through which the Conference “decides that the threat or use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States shall be prohibited”.

10. We strongly urge this Conference to move a step forward and to make a concrete decision on negative security assurances to assure non-nuclear-weapon States.

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