

Islamic Republic of

I R A N

Permanent Mission to the United Nations

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Before the First Committee of the General Assembly
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In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

Madam Chairperson,

At the outset, I seize this opportunity to congratulate you on your assumption of the chairmanship of this august body. I am confident that your diplomatic skill is an important asset for this committee to achieve positive outcomes this year. I would also like to felicitate the other members of the Bureau for their election.

I would like to associate my delegation with the statement delivered by the distinguished representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement in this Committee.

Madam Chairperson,

The continued existence, development of new types and proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) remain a real source of concern for the international community. The First Committee, as a main subsidiary body of the General Assembly dealing with disarmament, bears a solemn responsibility to address these concerns and to continue its efforts to strengthen the global ban against Weapons of Mass Destruction, especially nuclear weapons and to pursue their total elimination. Universal adherence to the three major legal instruments banning the Weapons of Mass Destruction, namely NPT, CWC and BWC should also be pursued as a top priority within world's disarmament agenda.

The Islamic Republic of Iran, as the victim of weapons of mass destruction, has a bitter experience of the most extensive chemical attacks ever occurred on its military and civilian population resulting in a large number of casualties among them. Since the end of the imposed war on Iran by the regime of Saddam Hussein, we still witness the daily

sufferings of thousands of chemical weapons victims across our country. With such a sad and harsh experience, Iran has a high motivation to pursue the elimination of all weapons of mass destruction and regard them as inhumane and dangerous tools detrimental to all human communities. As matter of principle, Iran spares no effort for achieving the lofty goal of a comprehensive WMD disarmament, in particular nuclear disarmament.

We welcome the establishment of the first nuclear-weapon-free zone located entirely in the northern hemisphere in our immediate neighbourhood, namely Central Asian Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone (CANWFZ). My delegation congratulates five Central Asia States – Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan – that signed the treaty creating a nuclear-weapon-free-zone (NWFZ) in the region. This treaty which forbids third countries from transporting or storing nuclear weapons or materials on or through the territory of Central Asia is an important step towards a world free from nuclear weapons. Indeed, the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones is a major step towards nuclear disarmament.

Notwithstanding this significant event, regrettably after 30 years of the adoption of the General Assembly resolution, initially proposed by Iran, on the establishment of a nuclear weapon free zone in the Middle East, no progress has been achieved for its realization because of the intransigent policy of Israel. It is worth mentioning that the only existing obstacle for the establishment of a nuclear-weapons-free-zone in the Middle East is the non-adherence of this regime to the NPT and its continued clandestine operation of the unsafe-guarded nuclear facilities with the help and technological assistance from the United States. This regime has paid no attention to the constant international call in different fora, particularly in the NPT 2000 Review Conference, in which 187 countries called upon this regime by name to accede to the NPT immediately and without any condition. Moreover, the said regime has never been a party to the other international instruments on Weapons of Mass Destruction, namely CWC, and BWC due to its biological and chemical weapons programmes. Ironically and indeed ridiculously, the Israeli regime, a non-member of the NPT, whose nuclear arsenal coupled with its expansionist and state-terror policies, which is repeatedly recognized as the single most serious threat to regional peace and security, cries wolf about Iran's peaceful nuclear program and has led a campaign of threats, lies, deception and blackmail against Iran. This indicates that those who are misled and manipulated by this campaign are in fact serving the interests of the Israeli regime.

Madam Chairperson,

The threat posed by the accumulation of estimated 27,000 nuclear weapons, in nuclear-weapon states, remains a grave worldwide concern. The lack of progress towards nuclear disarmament and the failure of certain nuclear weapons states to fulfil their obligations on total elimination of their nuclear arsenals as well as their new military doctrines based on the threat of use of nuclear weapons continue to be a source of threat for the international community.

We should not also lose sight of the fact that the only country that has ever used nuclear weapons during a conflict, namely the USA, still maintains a sizeable arsenal of thousands of nuclear warheads, of which many are operational and the remainder in reserve or stockpiles. Many warheads are deployed on land-based missile systems, on bombers, and on submarines. Hundreds of tactical nuclear weapons which consist of Tomahawk land attack cruise missiles and B61 bombs are ready to use. The United States has deployed nuclear weapons at bases in several European NATO countries in clear violation of the provisions of the NPT. Moreover, it continues to proliferating nuclear weapons vertically by pursuing vigorously development of new types of mini easy-to-use nuclear weapons and building new facilities for production of fissile materials purposed for new nuclear weapons. Just in one case, according to the US National Nuclear Security Administration, the United States can make plutonium pits for as many as 30-40 new warheads per year after 2010 in Los Alamos.

The United States is also proliferating nuclear weapons horizontally by transferring technology and materials to the non-members of the NPT whose unsafe-guarded nuclear facilities are aimed at production and development of nuclear weapons. Furthermore, no progress has been made in assuring the non-nuclear weapon states parties to the NPT against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons through a universal, unconditional and legally binding instrument. All of these developments have put at stake the whole future of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

The international community should vigorously pursue the nuclear disarmament obligations agreed upon in the 1995 and 2000 NPT Review Conferences, particularly in the upcoming meeting of the Preparatory Committee of the 2010 NPT Review Conference as it was decided by the General Assembly resolution 60/72 of 8 December 2005. In this context, we are of the view that all nuclear disarmament obligations, in particular the 13 practical steps, are integrated and should be implemented entirely. Therefore, a piecemeal approach such as those proposed for the FMCT falls short of addressing the issue at hand.

Madam Chairperson,

On the issue of missiles, my delegation wishes to express its gratitude for the new report of the Secretary General which was prepared with the assistance of the UNIDIR and DDA and submitted to the General Assembly pursuant to the resolution 59/67. This report is duly reflected in this year's resolution on "Missiles" sponsored by Egypt, Indonesia and Iran. It will be a valuable input to the third panel of governmental experts which will hold its first session from 11 to 15 June, 2007. We expect that the upcoming panel would succeed in fulfilling its mandate by identifying areas where consensus can be reached on the issue of missiles in all its aspects.

With respect to the Biological Weapons Convention, the Sixth Review Conference, which will take place later this year, is an important event to follow up the development regarding this Convention. In this context, my delegation would like to remind the States Parties to the BWC that the Islamic Republic of Iran has formally

renewed its proposal for the amendment of the Convention on the prohibition of use of biological weapons and expects that this issue will be discussed thoroughly.

One of the disappointing events in 2006 was the failure of the UN Conference to Review the Progress made in the Implementation of the Program of Action (POA) due to the rejection of the United States to continue follow-up the implementation of POA. My delegation reaffirms the total validity of the Programme of Action and strongly supports the efforts in the First Committee to adopt a decision on the follow-up to the Programme of Action in order to ensure its full implementation. We also believe that such follow-up is necessary for the implementation of the international instrument to enable States to identify and trace, in a timely and reliable manner, the illicit small arms and light weapons. We consider the establishment of the Group of Governmental Experts on illicit brokering which will commence its work very soon as a follow-up measure of the POA. In this context, we are of the view that the new proposed resolution on the issue of transfer control for preventing illicit trade of conventional arms should follow the UNPOA process. We should not abandon all achievements of UNPOA, including the international instrument of marking and tracing. We need to accomplish the task before undertaking a new ambitious course of action.

Before concluding, Madam Chairperson, I would like to touch upon the important issue of the inalienable right of the States parties to the NPT for peaceful uses of nuclear energy. This inalienable right in itself originates from two broader propositions. First, scientific and technological achievements are common heritage of humanity. Nuclear technology has broad applications, ranging from medicine and agriculture to providing a renewable source of energy. No nation can monopolize any scientific and technological achievements, including nuclear technology. A few countries that have already had the access to all kind of nuclear technologies can not create a new categorization of "have" and "have not" by pursuing a "Nuclear Technology Apartheid". Second, the NPT and all international instruments are based on a general proposition that is the requisite balance between rights and obligations. This balance guarantees the longevity of the legal regime by providing incentives for membership and compliance. The provisions of the NPT and IAEA Statute on the right to nuclear technology as well as the imperative of cooperation and sharing of the technology among those who have accepted the obligations of non-proliferation testify to the wisdom and understanding of their drafters. But in practice, we must guard against further entrenchment of the impression that membership in the NPT and the IAEA safeguard regime in fact constitute impediments for peaceful use while non-membership is rewarded by acquiescence, as in the case of development of one of the largest stockpiles of nuclear weapons in the Middle East. If anything, failure to accept NPT and safeguard obligations should have made the only outsider to the NPT in the region the subject of most severe restrictions and not provide it with impunity.

Like all other members of the NPT, Iran considers the pursuit and development of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes to be its inalienable right, and has thus invested extensive human and material resources in the field. At the same time, as repeatedly stated, nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction have no place in Iran's defense doctrine. We categorically reject the misleading and unsubstantiated allegations of the

United States about Iran's peaceful nuclear programme. All reports by the IAEA since November 2003 have been indicative of the peaceful nature of the Iranian nuclear program and the Agency repeatedly reaffirmed that it "has not seen any diversion of nuclear material to nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices."

In this context, my delegation would like to express its greatest appreciations to 118 countries of the Non-Aligned Movement for their support and the statement issued by their Heads of State or Government in Havana last month. The NAM Heads of State or Government expressed their conviction that "the only way to resolve the issue is to resume negotiations without any preconditions and to enhance cooperation with the involvement of all necessary parties."

We have already demonstrated our readiness for restarting talks without any preconditions by responding to the proposed package by the group of six countries, with our goodwill and intention to provide a reasonable breakthrough and have tried to lay the groundwork for resolving Iran's nuclear case through a constructive path for negotiations.

Thank you Madam Chairperson.