Statement by H.E. Mr. Mohsen Naziri Asl
Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Geneva
And President of the CD
Friday 21 June 2013

Mr. Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament,
Excellencies, Distinguished Colleagues,

The Islamic Republic of Iran strongly believes that the Conference on Disarmament as the sole multilateral negotiating forum on disarmament upholds its credibility and maintains its relevancy to international peace and security despite of its current difficulties. As a member of Non-Aligned Movement, nuclear disarmament has always been our highest priority and we are committed to efforts towards the attainment of a world free of nuclear weapons. In line with the high importance that we attach to the work of the CD, Iran assumed the presidency of this august body with a view to help overcoming the current deadlock which overshadows the credibility as well as the effectiveness of the conference.

Since the beginning of the presidency, it is reiterated that breaking the impasse is a collective responsibility. We are also fully aware of the complexity to break the impasse in the CD and to reach consensus on the Program of Work. But this difficulty did not, by any means, discourage us to do our utmost efforts to overcome the challenge. Quit the opposite, the valuable supports that I received from many delegations, to whom I am appreciative, encouraged us to spare no effort to consult intensively member states in finding a creative way to unlock the CD.

Thus, my main focus during the presidency was looking for agreement of the members on a comprehensive and balanced program of work. We started our tireless
efforts by consulting the delegations from different corners of this chamber and at various levels, on the concepts, approaches and alternatives. Three weeks of intensive consultations brings us to this conclusion that for the time being the best feasible approach is the pragmatic or as it was called by some as a “clever” approach, provided that a possible program of work under this approach enjoys all innovative efforts of the past Presidents in trying to simplify or streamline the program of work, to equally treat all core issues with respect to the mandate, modality and the language, and to avoid any kind of divisive mandate. According to these criteria we have prepared the text of the draft decision for program of work which has been distributed at the beginning of this week in the meeting with regional group coordinators. This document was formally tabled due to our initial assessment as well as inputs received. It was identified that text has the common denominator of all positions reflected in the consultations although a few members expressed their “hesitancy”. However further recent consultations, including of today, demonstrated that some members still need more time to come along with various elements of this proposal, and some members has yet to receive instructions from their capitals.

As I mentioned earlier, my main guide during presidency would be principles of impartiality, inclusiveness, transparency and adherence to the rules of procedures of the CD, particularly the rule of consensus. Furthermore we also attach grate importance to the credibility of the CD and would not like another failure that might undermine the credibility and integrity of the CD.

It is an unfortunate fact that the situation is not yet proper for taking action on our proposal, the text would be left as it is and we would not insist any formal action on the text at this plenary meeting.

Let me make it very unambiguous that from our national point of view, my delegation would strongly prefer negotiating mandate towards the program of work which should include a very clear reference to negotiation of a Nuclear Weapons Convention in this program. Presenting the document CD/1952 as the president of the CD in no way should prejudice the future position of the Islamic Republic of Iran on the Program of Work.

Once again I thank you for your understanding, cooperation and support.
Concluding remarks

Before concluding, I would like to express my thanks and appreciation for the kind words addressed to me personally by many delegations. My thanks go to my P6 colleagues that have worked together very well throughout the session and have been most supportive. I am most grateful to the Secretary General of the Conference, Mr. Kassym-Jomart Tokayev for his sustained engagement for the Conference and his valuable contribution. In this connection I wish to thank all the members of the Secretariat for their professionalism as well as for their assistance. I include the interpreters that help me to communicate with you. I would like to express my gratitude to those who produce reports on plenary meetings of the Conference on Disarmament on a regular basis including the representative of civil society. Last but not least I wish to thank the members of my team, Dr Reza Najafi and Dr. Mohammad Hassan Daryaei for their unfailing support and untiring efforts to promote the cause of the CD during my presidency.