



Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the  
United Nations Office and other international organizations-Geneva

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**Statement by Mr. Nabi Azadi**

**Representative of**

**The Islamic Republic of Iran**

**On**

**The Effective International Arrangements to Assure Non-Nuclear Weapon States**

**Against the Use or Threat of Use of Nuclear Weapons**

**(Negative Security Assurances, NSAs)**

**Before**

**The Plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament**

**On NSAs**

**Geneva, 9 February 2023**

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

**Mr. President,**

My delegation thanks you for convening this meeting and providing the opportunity for the CD to discuss the very important issue of the Effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons or as it is called Negative Security Assurances, NSAs.

My delegation associates itself with the G-21 statement on NSAs as delivered by Senegal on behalf of the Group and share the followings in its national capacity with regard to the NSAs.

**Mr. President,**

The nuclear weapons are the existential threat against the survival of humanity and that tragedies caused by nuclear weapons must never be repeated. As long as nuclear weapons exist, the risk of their use or threat of use persists. Due to the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of the nuclear weapons and the gravity of the danger posed by these weapons, my delegation believes that the only absolute guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is their total, irreversible, transparent and verifiable elimination with a specified time-frame and pending the realization of that goal, as an interim measure, the NNWS have the right to be assured against the use or threat of use of such weapons.

It is the legitimate right of all NNWS parties to the NPT, which have renounced the acquisition of nuclear weapons, to receive from the NWS effective, universal, unconditional, non-discriminatory and irrevocable legally binding security assurances against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons under all circumstances. These assurances, by strengthening the security of NNWS parties to the NPT, would promote

the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation as well “international peace and security” as reflected in the Final Document of the SSOD-I.

**Mr. President,**

Since nuclear weapons were used in 1945, there have been repeated calls by the non-nuclear-weapon States, in numerous resolutions of the UNGA, for the realization of effective, universal, unconditional, non-discriminatory and irrevocable legally binding security assurances against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. Regrettably, no real progress has yet been made to meet this reasonable requirement.

The NSAs, were part of the package that led to the adoption of the NPT. In fact, the history of the NSAs preceded the NPT when in 1966, as negotiations were commencing on what would become the NPT later on, the UNGA adopted resolution 21/53A, which calls on “Nuclear weapons powers to give an assurance that they will not use, or threaten to use, nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapons states without nuclear weapons on their territories”.

Such calls have also been made in the Final Document of the SSOD-I and NPT Review Conferences. The Final Document of the SSOD-I clearly states that “the Nuclear-Weapon States are called upon to take steps to assure the Non-Nuclear-Weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.” And “urges NWS to pursue efforts to conclude effective arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.”

Similarly, Para 8 of the 2<sup>nd</sup> decision of the 1995 NPT Review Conference reiterated that further steps should be considered to assure NNWSs against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons and these steps could take the form of an international legally binding instrument. In the same vein, Action 7 of the 2010 NPT Review Conferences Action Plan urges the CD to immediately begin discussion of the NSAs including elaborating international legally binding instrument.

**Mr. President,**

We heard some nuclear-weapon States arguing that NSAs should only be granted within the context of the nuclear-weapon-free zones. This is very contradictory to the notion and the concept of the NSAs and we reject this untenable argument based on the following reasons:

1. Not all Protocols of the Nuclear Weapons Free Zones have been signed or ratified by all NWSs;
2. Almost all of the Protocols have been signed and ratified with reservations and interpretative declarations contrary to the objectives and purposes of such instruments;
3. Those reservations and interpretations are incompatible with international law, in particular the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties of 1969 and are contrary to the “the object and purpose of” the free zones;
4. So far, none of the existing Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones have received “unconditional and irrevocable legally binding assurances”;

5. Those assurances are neither consistent nor identical and are subject to changes with time and circumstances;
6. The scope of the NWFZ are limited and there are NNWS outside those Zones;
7. The prospects for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in some regions such as the Middle East are quite unclear owing to the persistent refusal and defiance of the Israeli regime, supported by a certain NWSs, to accede to the NPT without any delay and conditions as a non-nuclear-weapon party.

**Mr. President,**

The NWSs made some unilateral declarations regarding security assurances against the use and threat of use of nuclear weapons. These assurances as reflected in the UNSC Resolutions 255 and 984, are conditional, partial and insufficient and, above all, can justify the use of such weapons by resorting to such vague, subjective and undefined concepts as “defending the vital interests” of a Nuclear Weapon State or its “allies and partners”.

In fact, they do not constitute any credible assurances at all and are not substitute for a legally binding instrument on NSAs. In addition, military and security policies, concepts and doctrines that allow the use or threat to use nuclear weapons blatantly contravene the existing deficient and conditional NSAs provided through unilateral declarations.

**Mr. President,**

The UNGA adopted the resolution 77/39 in December 2022 on the “Conclusion of effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons” without a vote. That overwhelming support must now be translated into concrete actions. With that in mind, one might say if the NWSs have good will and they do not intend to use or threat to use the nuclear weapons, then what is preventing them from agreeing on the start of negotiations on a legally binding instrument on NSAs? It is deplorable that after more than 5 decades, the start of negotiations on a legally binding instrument on NSAs in the CD is still elusive.

**Mr. President,**

As it was pointed out by many delegations, through the adoption of the decision CD/2229 and establishing Subsidiary Bodies in 2022 session, the CD had substantive discussions with regard to NSAs in SB4 under the guidance of Indonesia. Although the draft report was not adopted regrettably, however it showed that there was no objection in principle to the idea of effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear weapons States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. It also contains some elements particularly in the “way forward” section that are useful for our work here in the CD. That section recommends, inter alia, to establish an Ad Hoc

Committee on NSAs in the CD in 2023 session. My delegation fully supports that recommendation.

**Mr. President,**

NNWSs call for an internationally legally binding instrument to effectively, unconditionally, non-discriminatorily and irrevocably assure all NNWSs against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons under all circumstances. Such assurances are not optional choice of the NWS or as a justification to pretend that they can retain their nuclear weapons perpetually, but rather a legal obligation and undertaking.

For so many years, Iran, along with the G21 members, has been calling for the start of negotiations on an international legally binding instrument on NSAs in the CD. My delegation believes that the NSAs is the lowest hanging fruit for negotiation in the CD. Given to the growing risk of use of nuclear weapons, providing NSAs to all NNWSs is more urgent than before and therefore, it is necessary that the CD immediately begin negotiations on NSAs. My delegation is looking forward to cooperating with you and CD members to realize that goal.

**I thank you Mr. President.**