



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

Statement

By

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Before

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On the Thematic Debate on Nuclear Weapon Free Zone

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Mr. President,

My delegation thanks you for convening this plenary meeting on the thematic debate of the Nuclear Weapon Free Zone (NWFZ) and I would like to thank UNIDIR for the informative introductory presentation in this regard.

This is an important topic and quite pertinent to our work here and is indeed in line with the mandate of the Conference on Disarmament.

Mr. President,

The ultimate goal is the Nuclear Weapon Free World. The establishment of Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones (NWFZ) by definition is a regional approach toward that goal to strengthen global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation norms and consolidate international efforts towards peace and security. We value the role of treaties that form the basis for the existing NWFZs, namely treaty of Tlatelolco, treaty of Rarotonga, treaty of Bangkok, treaty of Pelindaba and Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia in achieving the noble goal of the world free of nuclear weapons.

Article VII of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) states: “Nothing in this Treaty affects the right of any group of States to conclude regional treaties in order to assure the total absence of nuclear weapons in their respective territories”.

Furthermore, through the assured total absence of nuclear weapons and the requirement of negative security assurances, NWFZs can contribute to the enhancement of regional and international peace and security. They can also act as an effective CBMs.

Mr. President,

Article VII of the NPT, has underlined the importance of the establishment of such zones. The SSOD-I final document, as the funding document of the CD in its current format and mandate, deals with the NWFZs in different paragraphs and clearly states that the “NWFZ by ensuring such zones are genuinely free from nuclear weapons and strict respect for such zones by NWS, constitute an important disarmament measures”. At the same time, it emphasizes that “serious consideration of the practical and urgent steps required for the establishment a nuclear weapon free zone in the Middle East, where the danger of nuclear weapon proliferation exist.” It also signifies the importance of the MENWFZ in para 63(d) by saying that “the establishment of a NWFZ in the ME would greatly enhance international peace and security”.

Mr. President,

As a steadfast supporter of nuclear disarmament, Iran has always supported and welcomed efforts to establish nuclear weapon free zones and, at the same time, reiterates that such zones, are not substitute for the legal obligations of the nuclear weapon States under article VI of the NPT and their unequivocal undertakings to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals leading to nuclear disarmament. Therefore, the total elimination of nuclear weapons worldwide is vital to establish a Nuclear Weapon Free World.

Iran has consistently and strongly supported the establishment of a nuclear

weapon free zone in the Middle East for more than half a century when it proposed to establish such a zone in early 1970s.

In October 1970 during the 25th Session of the General Assembly, the Iranian Minister of Foreign Affairs, in his statement before the UNGA reiterated that and I quote: “to facilitate ...the implementation of the NPT.....Iran is ready to declare the Middle East a Nuclear free Zone, should other countries of the area agree to do so.”

A year later, during the 26th Session of the UNGA in September 1971, Iran’s Minister of Foreign Affairs in his statement before the UNGA emphasized and I quote: “I should conclude my remarks on disarmament by proposing once again that the Middle East should be declared a nuclear free zone.” Finally, this proposal officially was sent to the UNGA through a joint letter by Iran and Egypt in 1974 and regrettably almost half a century this zone yet to be established. We are still committed in pursuing this goal.

Mr. President,

Since then Iran has spare no efforts to advance the goal of establishing the Middle East Nuclear Weapons Free Zone, either through the NPT RevCons process or through the UN measures, particularly in accordance with UNGA decision 546. These two processes are independent, yet parallel avenues intended to achieve this long-overdue goal and complement, but cannot replace, each other.

Nonetheless, **Mr. President**, the both processes are confronted with significant impediments that have blocked and jeopardized the realization of the MENWFZ.

In this regard, Israeli regime as the main obstacle to any progress toward the establishment of such a zone and the only of in the region remained out of the NPT, must first and foremost adopt a transparent policy and depart from the so-called strategic nuclear ambiguity, renounce possession of all WMDs, and join all relevant international legally-binding instruments, in particular, must unconditionally join the NPT and subject its nuclear facilities and activities under the IAEA's comprehensive safeguards monitoring.

Mr. President,

In 1995, during the Review and Extension Conference of the NPT and as one of the main element of a package that led to the indefinite extension of the NPT, the resolution cosponsored by the Russian Federation, the UK and the U.S. on the Middle East WMD free Zone was adopted by consensus. The NPT's indefinite extension without a vote would not have been possible without addressing the Middle East Nuclear Weapons Free Zone which has been a long standing goal for countries in the region.

Despite the strong support of the overwhelming majority of the States parties to the NPT, as well as the efforts by countries in the region, the 1995 resolution and the 2010 action plan on the Middle East are yet to be implemented.

Mr. President,

While expressing its deep concern over the persistent and long delay in the implementation of the 1995 resolution and the 2010 plan of action on the Middle East, Iran stresses that implementation of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East is the collective responsibility, in particular the responsibility of nuclear weapon States, and especially the three depositary States of the Treaty that co-sponsored the 1995 resolution.

Mr. President,

Iran reiterates its consistent position on supporting the prompt and full implementation of the 1995 resolution and the 2010 NPT RevCon plan of action on the Middle East and the urgent need to that end. In the same vein, Iran fully supports the process launched by the Conference on the Establishment of a MEWMDFZ convened by the Secretary-General, pursuant to UNGA decision 73/546, to elaborate a legally binding treaty on the establishment of the zone on the basis of consensus.

I thank you Mr. President.