Thank you Mr. President,

At the outset, let me congratulate you on assuming the presidency of this august body, the single multilateral negotiating forum on disarmament. I feel committed to appreciating all of your tireless and diligent efforts so far, and assure you of my delegation’s full support and cooperation in fulfilling your mandate as the CD president.

I would also like to take the opportunity to welcome distinguished Ambassadors of Norway, Japan, Malaysia, Finland and Pakistan who have recently joined us.

Aligning with the G-21 statement delivered by Vietnam, I am honored to speak on behalf of the Islamic Republic of Iran before this august body.

Mr. President, Distinguished Colleagues,

The Conference on Disarmament as the sole multilateral negotiating forum, has the mandate of negotiating legally binding instruments in the field of disarmament in accordance with the final document of the First Special Session of the General Assembly Devoted to Disarmament.

To meet its mandate, the Conference should adopt a comprehensive and balanced program of work that would bring it back into working mode. It is important to preserve the negotiating mandate of this unique body and avoid
attempts to turn it into a deliberative mechanism.

2023 ended with an unprecedented arms race, nuclear threats and rhetorics, genocide, and committing all types of crimes against humanity and war crimes in the Palestinian occupied territories.

There has been a worrying nuclear race coupled with the balatant threat to the use of nuclear weapons. Nuclear Weapon States not only failed to fulfill their commitments to halt and reverse the pace but also undertake to renew and modernize their nuclear arsenals.

Let me indicate to the fact that last year, the US has spent more than all of the other nuclear armed states on nuclear weapons, and it is really regrettable that the Final Report of the Congressional Commission on the Strategic Posture of the US, states, should conventional forces not meet the US objectives, the US will use nuclear weapons.¹

Also, regretfully, a brazen nuclear threat emerged from the Israeli regime against Gaza and another by the regime’s prime minister on September 2023 against my country, which is a blatant breach of fundamental principles of international law, including the NPT and the UN Charter.

All of these facts acknowledge that the danger of a nuclear war is very high, and the continued existence of nuclear weapons, aggravates tensions in the international security environment and represents a grave threat to humanity.

Mr. President, distinguished delegates,

When there is a major and imminent threat of nuclear weapons, nuclear disarmament should remain our top priority, with a particular focus on negotiating elements of a legally binding instrument for the total, irreversible, and verifiable elimination of all nuclear weapons.

Iran, like the other non-nuclear armed states, is worried about the current situation and urges nuclear weapon states to fulfill their international obligations

under the NPT and undertake to eliminate all their nuclear arsenals.

It is worth to recall that the article VI of the NPT obligates the five nuclear-armed states to negotiate nuclear disarmament, and as the International Court of Justice advisory opinion found in 1996, this means concluding those negotiations and eliminating their arsenals. Yet, these states have for decades refused to engage in such negotiations or to implement even the most basic commitments they have made to nuclear disarmament at past NPT Review Conferences, including in 2010 and 2000.

Action 5 of the 2010 NPT Review Conference outcome document committed nuclear-armed states to diminish the role and significance of nuclear weapons in all military and security concepts, doctrines, and policies and to further enhance transparency and increase mutual confidence. They were also by Action 21, encouraged to agree on a standard reporting form.

It is regrettable that, in spite of all unfulfilled obligations, nuclear weapon weapons not only failed to meet their disarmament commitments but also undertake, in contradiction of their non-proliferation obligations through nuclear sharing arrangements.

Iran calls on nuclear-armed states to undertake nuclear disarmament and cease their modernization programmes, and for nuclear-endorsing states to stop hosting other countries’ nuclear weapons on their territories and reject the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons on their behalf.

Let me add that, pending the ultimate goal of nuclear weapons free world, non-nuclear weapon states have also entitled to enjoy Negative Security Assurances. The final document of the SSODI in 1978 asked nuclear weapon states to “pursue efforts to conclude appropriate, effective arrangements to assure NNWS against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.” The same has been highlighted by the NPT Review Conferences, particularly in the 13 practical steps in 2000 RevCon and the action plan on nuclear disarmament in 2010 RevCon, which includes concrete steps for the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

**Distinguished delegates, dear colleagues,**
I wish to draw your attention to the main source of instability in the Middle East region, the Israeli Regime. This regime poses a great threat to international and regional peace and security, particularly through its nuclear weapon arsenals as well as its clandestine and unsafeguarded nuclear installations and activities. The Regime, as the only obstacle to a Middle East Weapons of Mass Destruction Free Zone, keeps accumulating all kinds of Weapons of Mass destruction without being a party to any legally binding international disarmament instrument and without being subject to any safeguards or verification mechanisms.

The Israeli regime has continued to blatantly violate fundamental rules and principles of international law, notably international humanitarian law and international human rights law, for more than seven decades. This violation includes indiscriminate bombing and shelling of Gaza, collective punishment of Palestinians, use of white phosphorus in Gaza and Lebanon, forced displacement and transfer of civilians, deliberate targeting of civilians, notably women and children, as well as civilian infrastructure, and the use of starvation by cutting of supplies against civilians in Gaza.

It’s time collective measures be taken to harness and put an end to the Israeli Regime’s heinous crimes and unlawful nuclear activities. The regime should join the NPT as a non-nuclear member and put all its nuclear facilities and activities under international safeguards.

Mr. President,

Let me conclude that the critical importance of the Conference on Disarmament as the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating forum cannot be overemphasized.

We will all be at a loss in the long run if we continue to fail to overcome the CD’s prolonged deadlock. We look forward to working with you, Mr. President, and with other delegations to craft a comprehensive and balanced program of work that encompasses all CD’s core mandates in accordance with the final document of the First Special Session of the General Assembly Devoted to Disarmament.

Thank you!