

Views of the Islamic Republic of Iran on Resolution 79/16 on the Establishment of a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in the Middle East

In alignment with Iran's commitment to reject all WMDs and its participation in relevant treaties specifically the NPT, BWC, and CWC, our active and constructive engagement in all sessions of the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction stands as a strong testament to our sincere pursuit of complete and permanent elimination of all WMDs. This underscores the resolute and enduring dedication of the Islamic Republic of Iran to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, as well as to the materialization of a WMD-free zone in the Middle East - an initiative first presented by Iran in 1974.

Expressing our disappointment with the lack of progress observed in the consecutive NPT Review Conferences of 2015 and 2022, as well as the fourth and fifth CWC Review Conferences of 2018 and 2023, we find it disheartening to witness the stagnation in advancing the implementation of the 1995 NPT Review Conference's resolution regarding the Middle East. The ramifications of such failures on the proceedings and outcomes of the aforementioned Conference warrant global concern.

It is pertinent to reiterate that the pathways stemming from the NPT Review Conferences and UNGA decision 546 are distinct yet parallel routes aimed at accomplishing this long-overdue objective. The fulfillment of this goal necessitates decisive actions from both avenues. While these two routes can complement each other, they are not interchangeable.

However, given the prevailing circumstances, it is evident that both processes encounter significant obstacles that could undermine their success. To bolster regional security in the Middle East, the Israeli regime must take the step of adopting a transparent policy, relinquishing the so-called concept of strategic ambiguity, renouncing its possession of WMDs, and acceding to all relevant international legally binding agreements. Paramount among these steps is unconditional accession to the NPT as a non-nuclear weapon party, coupled with subjecting all nuclear facilities and activities to comprehensive safeguards administered by the IAEA.

Additionally, the Israeli regime's commitment to implementing the CWC and BWC is indispensable for the creation of such a zone.

The driving force behind the resolution on the Middle East adopted during the 1995 Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT, along with the outcomes of the 2000 and 2010 Review Conferences, has been a shared concern among Treaty States parties. This concern pertains to the grave threat posed by the Israeli regime's nuclear weapons program to the security and stability of not only the Middle East but also beyond. It is also rooted in the global aspiration for non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. The existence of this nuclear arsenal obstructs the attainment of peace and stability in this volatile region, and any attempt to downplay the danger of WMDs in the hands of this regime is untenable.

It is worth mentioning that the success of the aforementioned Conference is in jeopardy as long as the Israeli regime refrains from participation and receives support from the United States, which also abstains from engaging constructively in the Conference's proceedings. The international community is urged to assist the region in surmounting these obstacles on the path to establishing a Middle East free from all forms of WMDs.

The unwavering support provided by the United States to the Israeli regime, which encompasses tolerating this regime's dangerous nuclear weapons program, in addition to the lack of constructive involvement by both in the said Conference, requires due consideration from the international community. These dynamics significantly impede progress.

The Israeli regime's intransigence and disregard for international norms are sustained by the steadfast backing of the United States. Despite its clear international obligations under the 1995 Middle East resolution and the outcomes of the 2000 and 2010 Review Conferences, the United States persistently falls short of fulfilling these commitments. It is crucial to recognize that as long as the United States adheres to its imprudent and inconsistent approach toward the Israeli regime's clandestine nuclear weapons program - which indeed is a real case of proliferation in the region - the risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East will persist.

The communiqué issued by the OIC member states, on 10 November 2023, condemning the Israeli regime's nuclear threat against its two member states is a welcomed move. It is expected that the same route be followed by the

United Nations as a starting point to neutralize the imminent threat emanated from the Israeli regime's WMD arsenals.

Iran underscores the United Nations' pivotal role in establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East and anticipates the Secretary-General's unwavering efforts to promote this objective in a focused manner, including through dedicated and formal reporting mechanisms. Furthermore, Iran expects the Secretary-General to reaffirm the imperative of the Israeli regime's accession to the Treaty, unconditionally and without delay, as a non-nuclear-weapon party. This step would significantly contribute to realizing the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East.

Additionally, Iran notes with grave concern the continued escalation of tensions in the region throughout 2024, following the Israeli regime's continued genocidal war against Palestinians in Gaza, its illegal territorial incursions into Syria and Lebanon, and its destabilizing acts of sabotage and attacks across the region, including within the sovereign territory of the Islamic Republic of Iran. These tragedies, stemming from the Israeli regime's persistent disregard for international law and norms, further underscore the imperative necessity of establishing a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction as an indispensable foundation for sustainable regional security and stability.