



Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran

to the United Nations Office and
other International Organizations in Geneva

Statement

by

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before

The Plenary of the Conference on Disarmament

Under Agenda Item 1:

Cessation of the Nuclear Arms Race and Nuclear Disarmament

Geneva, 6 August 2026

In the Name of God, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful

Thank you, Mr. President.

Since it's the first time my delegation takes the floor during your presidency, Iran would like to extend its congratulations to you and your team on assuming the Presidency of the Conference on Disarmament. We also thank you for convening this meeting, under agenda item 1.

We warmly welcome the distinguished Ambassadors of Algeria and South Africa, and look forward to working with them.

We would also like to express our appreciation to the panelists for their valuable presentations and insightful contributions to our discussions.

Mr. President,

Nuclear weapons remain the most serious threat to humanity and international peace and security. The catastrophic humanitarian consequences of their use, as well as the continuing risks associated with their existence, demonstrate the urgent necessity of their complete elimination. The only absolute guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is their total, irreversible, and verifiable elimination.

Nuclear disarmament is not a matter of political choice or aspiration. It is a legal obligation firmly established under international law.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), as the cornerstone of the international nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime, is based on a carefully negotiated balance among its three mutually reinforcing pillars, and this balance constitutes the foundation of the Treaty's credibility and sustainability.

The NPT represents a historic bargain. Non-nuclear-weapon States undertook not to acquire nuclear weapons and accepted safeguards on their peaceful nuclear activities. In return, nuclear-weapon States committed themselves, under Article VI of the Treaty, to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament.

This obligation has been reaffirmed through successive NPT Review Conferences, including the commitments contained in the 1995, 2000 and 2010 Review Conference outcomes.

Furthermore, the 1996 Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice confirmed the existence of an obligation to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control. Regrettably, despite these clear obligations, genuine progress towards nuclear disarmament remains absent.

Instead of taking concrete steps towards elimination, nuclear-weapon possessing States continue to maintain and modernize their nuclear arsenals, develop new nuclear capabilities and preserve doctrines that assign a continuing role to nuclear weapons in their security policies.

Such approaches undermine the credibility of the NPT, perpetuate the nuclear arms race and weaken international efforts towards achieving a world free of nuclear weapons.

The continued reliance on nuclear deterrence, nuclear sharing arrangements and the deployment or potential deployment of nuclear weapons in territories of non-nuclear-weapon States further aggravate strategic tensions and contradict the objective of reducing the role and significance of nuclear weapons.

Mr. President,

Transparency, confidence-building and risk-reduction measures may contribute to reducing tensions and enhancing predictability. However, they cannot substitute for

nuclear disarmament obligations and must not become alternatives to the elimination of nuclear weapons. Such measures derive their value only when they contribute to genuine progress towards nuclear disarmament.

Mr. President,

Verification is an important component of any future nuclear disarmament agreement. However, it is a means to facilitate and support disarmament commitments; it is not an end in itself and cannot be considered a precondition for advancing nuclear disarmament.

The Final Document of the First Special Session of the General Assembly Devoted to Disarmament (SSOD-I) recognized the importance of adequate verification measures in disarmament agreements and emphasized that verification arrangements should be satisfactory to all parties, ensure compliance and contribute to confidence-building.

Similarly, the 2010 NPT Review Conference recognized the importance of developing nuclear disarmament verification capabilities necessary to provide assurance of compliance with future disarmament agreements.

Any future verification mechanism should therefore be developed through an inclusive, transparent and non-discriminatory multilateral process, with the participation of all interested States. It should be based on agreed principles and effective international control and should never serve as a substitute for the fulfillment of nuclear disarmament commitments.

Mr. President,

The Conference on Disarmament, as the single multilateral negotiating forum on disarmament, bears a special responsibility in advancing nuclear disarmament.

The international community cannot accept the indefinite continuation of the current situation. The absence of progress is not due to a lack of legal principles or technical knowledge and expertise; rather, it is the result of insufficient political will.

The Islamic Republic of Iran therefore reiterates its call for the immediate commencement of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament on a comprehensive, universal, non-discriminatory and legally binding Nuclear Weapons Convention aimed at the complete, irreversible and verifiable elimination of all nuclear weapons.

Mr. President,

A comprehensive approach to nuclear disarmament must also address the longstanding issue of nuclear weapons in the Middle East.

The continued possession of nuclear weapons in the region by the Israeli regime, its refusal to accede to the NPT as a non-nuclear-weapon party and the absence of comprehensive IAEA safeguards over all its nuclear activities remain serious concerns for regional and international peace and security.

The establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction remains an essential objective and an integral part of the agreement reached in connection with the indefinite extension of the NPT in 1995. States that continue to provide military, financial, and political support to Israel undoubtedly bear responsibility for the continuation of the current situation in the Middle East.

Mr. President,

The Islamic Republic of Iran remains fully committed to nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy in accordance with the rights and obligations established under the NPT.

We firmly believe that nuclear weapons cannot provide sustainable security. True and lasting peace can only be achieved through their complete elimination under effective international control.

Nuclear-weapon States bear a special responsibility to demonstrate the necessary political will, fulfill their legal obligations, halt the nuclear arms race and engage without delay in negotiations leading to the total, irreversible and verifiable elimination of all nuclear weapons.

The realization of a world free of nuclear weapons is not merely an aspiration. It is a legal obligation, a political necessity and a shared responsibility towards present and future generations.

Before concluding, Mr. President, and with regard to the reference made to the HCOG and China's missile activities, I would like to take this opportunity to place on record that the HCOG is a voluntary political arrangement with a limited number of participating States. This arrangement is binding only upon its participating States and cannot create obligations or restrictions for non-participating States. Such an arrangement cannot restrict or prejudice the legitimate rights of States to pursue their defensive programs.

I thank you, Mr. President.