

Islamic Republic of **I R A N**

Permanent Mission to the United Nations

**Statement by
H.E. Mr. Mohammad Khazaei
Ambassador and Permanent Representative of
The Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations
Before the First Committee of the General Assembly
New York, 16 October 2007**

In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, allow me to congratulate you on your assumption of the chairmanship of this important Committee. I am confident that, with your diplomatic skill and experience, the Committee will conclude its work with success. My congratulations equally go to other members of the Bureau as well. I also would like to seize this opportunity to express my felicitation to Mr. Duarte, the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, and wish him success in accomplishing his immense responsibility to promote the cause of disarmament. I wish to associate my delegation with the statement made by the distinguished representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Mr. Chairman,

The Islamic Republic of Iran, as the only victim of the use of chemical weapons in recent history, is highly motivated to pursue the realization of the lofty goal of a world free from Weapons of Mass Destruction. Since the end of the war imposed on Iran by the regime of Saddam Hussein, tens of thousands of Iranians continue to suffer and perish as a result of chemical weapons whose components came from certain countries permanently seated in the UN Security Council. I do not need to go far to find these victims. Almost a year ago, we lost one of our brightest colleagues in the Mission, Mahdi Vahidi, to cancer caused by these very chemical weapons. Mahdi was only 39.

International community should not accept that the coming generations should continue to live under the horrifying shadow of possible use of WMD. We must ensure that the people of Iran would remain the very last victim of use of weapons of mass destruction of any type at any time and under any circumstances. Iran has manifested its determination towards this end, by adhering to three major legal instruments, namely NPT, BWC and CWC and by putting forward the idea of the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East.

The existence, development of new types and horizontal as well as vertical proliferation of weapons of mass destruction continue to pose a real threat to regional and international peace and security. Today the international community is more than ever concerned by the continued existence of thousands of nuclear warheads in the stockpiles of certain nuclear-weapon State. The United States, which boasts to have the leadership in fight against WMD, continues to stress the essential role of nuclear weapons as an effective tool for achieving security as well as foreign policy objectives, and threaten to target non-nuclear-weapon States Parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Developing new nuclear weapon system, constructing new facilities for producing nuclear weapons, and resuming efforts to develop and deploy tactical nuclear weapons despite the commitment to effectively reduce them, are among the long list of non-compliance of the United States with its obligations. The same country is planning to spend 50 billion dollars to build a "missile shield" in order to get the so-called "absolute security" for itself which would lead to the creation of a strategic and security gap within the overall global nuclear posture with grave and long term consequences for the whole world. But in an interdependent world, such a goal is neither achievable nor possible.

The principle of undiminished security for all is the key element in achieving and maintaining the international peace and security. The traditional zero sum approach to security which ultimately prescribes the enhancement of one's security at the expense of others should be abandoned. It must be replaced by cooperation and mutual respect.

Mr. Chairman,

In our view, the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones is an essential instrument to consolidate nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. For nearly three decades, it has been consistently emphasized by the General Assembly and IAEA resolutions that the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East would greatly enhance international peace and security. Yet, the Israeli regime continues to be the only impediment in realizing such a zone in the Middle East due to its non-adherence to the NPT as well as its continued clandestine operation of the unsafeguarded nuclear facilities. It is indeed ironic that this regime which has rejected and violated every single resolution of the Security Council and General Assembly, and flouted all international regimes on weapons of mass destruction, has received not only acquiescence, but in fact material and financial support for its WMD program from the United States. The Israeli concealment and unabated pursuance of nuclear arsenals, during the past several decades, have always been but an open secret. However, the possession of nuclear weapons by the Israeli regime is not a rumor or rhetoric any more. The Israeli Prime Minister's acknowledgement of the unlawful possession of nuclear weapons by his regime, in his interview with a German TV channel on 11 December 2006, revealed the real nature of the said regime's clandestine nuclear activities which pose a serious and continuing

threat to the international as well as regional peace and security. The international community, especially countries in the region, must unite in curbing the threats posed by the weapons of mass destruction of the Israeli regime, and in pursuing the establishment of a zone free from weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East at the earliest possible time.

Mr. Chairman,

The lack of progress towards the realization of nuclear disarmament and the failure of certain nuclear-weapon States to fulfill their obligations in this regard are frustrating. With the cold-war now behind us, there remains no longer any justification, if there ever were any, to continue to retain stockpiles of nuclear weapons, much less develop new ones. We strongly believe that the preservation of credibility of the nuclear disarmament obligations would contribute to strengthening cooperation in non-proliferation.

Consistent with its long-standing policy, the Islamic Republic of Iran will present its draft resolution on the "follow-up to nuclear disarmament obligations agreed to in 1995 and 2000 Review Conferences of States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons". While noting that the Preparatory Committee for the 2010 Review Conference of the States Party to the Non-Proliferation Treaty held a successful first meeting in Vienna in 2007, we reaffirm the significance of the NPT Review Conferences for providing good opportunity to hold accountable the nuclear-weapon States with respect to fulfilling their nuclear disarmament commitments. Indeed, we are satisfied with the fact that "compliance with all provisions of the NPT", including Article VI of the Treaty on nuclear disarmament is now on the agenda of the review process. It will give us a good chance to follow-up the nuclear disarmament obligations agreed to in 1995 and 2000. We are confident that this resolution would be supported by majority of Member States as it was the case last time.

Mr. Chairman,

Given the frustration of a decade-long impasse, the efforts made in the Conference on Disarmament with the goal of exiting from the current impasse are understandable. However, we should not sacrifice the highest priority of international community, namely nuclear disarmament and must strive to reach a balanced programme of work that would be responsive to security of all. We hope that a balanced programme of work could create a new momentum for departure towards elimination of nuclear weapons in a time-bound manner. Iran will maintain its position on the need for revitalization of nuclear disarmament negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament as well as within the context of the NPT.

As regards the Biological Weapons Convention, we note with satisfaction that the Sixth Review Conference, which took place last fall in Geneva, concluded its work with the agreement on a follow-up mechanism aimed at promoting understanding among States Parties. We once again

underline the need for resumption of serious negotiations in order to strengthen the Convention through the establishment of an effective protocol.

It is indeed disappointing that the Working Group on Forth Special Session of the General Assembly devoted to Disarmament (SSOD IV) failed to reach conclusion due to the continuation of the unilateralist approach of the United States. While appreciating the efforts made by its Chairman, we hope that the impasse in negotiations on SSOD IV would not lead to the perpetuation of the current situation.

On the issue of the UN Third Panel on missiles, we are pleased that the first session of the Panel had a very constructive and serious discussion on the complex issue of missiles in all its aspects. Since the Panel will have two more sessions in 2008, my delegation has decided to present a draft decision rather than to introduce a substantive resolution this year, as suggested by 2005 recommendations of the Committee on "methods of Work".

With respect to the issue of conventional weapons, particularly the problem of illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, the Islamic Republic of Iran has already submitted its views in details to the UN Secretariat which would officially be circulated. In short, we are of the opinion that the efforts, time and resources that have been spent on the conclusion and implementation of the UN Programme of Action should not be abandoned. Given the current positions and disagreements on the issue of Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), it is also premature to begin a new process while the main problem of the developing countries in this field, namely the illicit trade in small arms, remains unresolved.

Mr. Chairman,

Last but not least, I wish to elaborate on latest development of the Iranian nuclear issue. As we have stressed time and again, Iran's nuclear program is completely peaceful. All reports issued by the IAEA since November 2003 have been indicative of the peaceful nature of the Iranian nuclear programme, and the Agency has repeatedly reaffirmed that it "has not seen indications of diversion of nuclear material to nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices". Despite this fact, in an unwarranted move, orchestrated by few of its permanent members, the Security Council has taken unlawful, unnecessary and unjustifiable actions against the peaceful nuclear program of the Islamic Republic of Iran which presents no threat to international peace and security and falls therefore outside the Council's Charter-based mandate.

Without a doubt, the move to bring the Iranian nuclear file to the Security Council, and the intention of the co-sponsors of the resolution adopted thus far, have been derived from their ulterior motives and narrow national considerations in order to deprive the Iranian people of their inalienable rights, rather than emanating from any so-called proliferation concerns.

Despite the politically-motivated actions by a few countries which had led to the deadlock and interruption of negotiations, the Islamic Republic of Iran has, once again, taken a new initiative that has received wide support and appreciation. During the negotiations held between the Secretary of the Supreme National Security Council of Iran and the EU High Representative, acting on behalf of the Group of 5+1, Iran agreed to take a major step in negotiating with the Agency on the modality of dealing with the few outstanding issues. Pursuant to that agreement, in the course of a meeting with the IAEA Director General, it was agreed that, within 60 days, the modalities of resolution of the outstanding issues be discussed and concluded. As a result of intensive negotiations which were held between two sides, the final text of the mutual understanding (reflected in the Agency's document INFCIRC/711) was concluded on 21 August 2007 in Tehran. Bearing in mind the past experience dealing such technical issues with the Agency, it was agreed that all issues should be taken up in a sequential and in a well-defined timeframe rather than dealing with them simultaneously and without prioritization. In a very short period of time, two of the major remaining issues, namely Plutonium experiment and the contamination at the Karaj Facility were resolved.

As the IAEA Director General assessed and reported to the Board of Governors, the agreed modality is "a significant step forward". Therefore, it is essential to note that Iran's initiative has created a new positive environment and opened a window of opportunity for the return of Iran's nuclear dossier to the Agency's framework in full. In our view, the right path for the peaceful resolution of the nuclear issue goes through dialogue and technical elaboration within its proper and legal context which is the framework of the IAEA.

The people and Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran are determined to exercise their inalienable right to nuclear technology for peaceful purposes and to build on their own scientific advances in developing various peaceful aspects of this technology. Iran does commit to its obligations under the NPT and does not request any thing more than exercising its inalienable rights.

Thank you for your kind attention.