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**Statement**

**by**

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**The Minister for Foreign Affairs of  
The Islamic Republic of Iran**

**before**

**The Conference on Disarmament**

**Geneva, 28 February 2012**

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## In the Name of God the Compassionate the Merciful

Mr. President, distinguished Delegates,

It is indeed great pleasure to address the Conference on Disarmament today. At the outset I take this opportunity to congratulate you on the assumption of the Presidency of the Conference. I am aware and appreciative of your diligent efforts in trying to pave the way for the resumption of substantive negotiations in the CD. I wish you and the Secretary-General of the Conference every success in your important missions.

Mr. President,

We attach great importance to the Conference on Disarmament as the sole negotiating body in the field of disarmament. The impressive record of achievements, special composition, unique rules of procedure and the wide agenda of the CD makes this body the only forum suitable in the framework of negotiation on disarmament. If we were to try to rebuild a forum to start negotiation on disarmament and international security issues it wouldn't be much different from the existing CD.

International community today is faced with serious common challenges such as continued existence of nuclear weapons, climate change, outbreak of infectious diseases, economic crisis and poverty. These common threats to human beings are imminent, interlinked and multifaceted. The sense of insecurity in facing them creates a dire situation that states can no longer exclusively rely on the narrowly perceived definition of the classic national security. No country, regardless of its size and power can claim that it can preserve its national security and protect itself against all these odds alone. Hence, all nations must develop the urge to join hands so as to achieve *Sustainable Security*.

*Sustainable Security* necessitates justice, respect for rule of

law, faithful cooperation and change in our attitudes and a full departure from old cold war antagonistic presumptions that no longer fit with the requirements of the new world and its common challenges. Non-discrimination, inclusiveness, rationality, realistic threat perception, respecting the rights of all nations, and serving the enhanced security for all will certainly contribute greatly to its realization.

However, the gravest threat to *Sustainable Security* remains to be the existence of nearly 23000 nuclear weapons in the arsenals of a few countries capable of destroying the whole world many times over. The danger of these weapons would be enormously increased when some of these countries feel free to officially threaten others, including non nuclear weapon states, with the use of these immoral and illegitimate weapons. It is a matter of serious concern that the humankind continues to live under the shadow of threat of nuclear weapons, while the inhumane massacre in Hiroshima and Nagasaki still remains imprinted in our memories. As long as nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction exist and continuously upgraded, there would always be a risk for their use and also vertical or horizontal proliferation.

Mr. President,

The issue of revitalization of the CD has been a hot topic in recent years. Lots of radical procedural ideas were presented in the High Level Meetings and its follow up process. However, the root cause of such unfortunate continued deadlock in the CD is not a procedural problem or institutional inefficiency; it is rather the lack of political will. Hence the repercussions of the existence of nuclear weapons including the military alliances based on nuclear umbrella , nuclear sharing and deployment of nuclear weapons in the territory of other non-nuclear weapon states, a more heightened global military expenditure and plan for spending \$700 billion on modernizing nuclear warheads and building new production

facilities, the strategic shift and the unilateral approach adopted by some major powers, and new military doctrines setting the rationale for the possible use of nuclear weapons and in brief lack of progress towards nuclear disarmament has paralyzed the disarmament machinery for a long time. Consequently, the CD has been unable to embark upon meaningful negotiations on the most urgent security requirement for our world today, namely the nuclear disarmament.

Mr. President,

At this juncture, I would like to highlight that the current exercise of double standards and discrimination are the main threats for the credibility of the NPT. This Treaty in no way provides the right for nuclear weapon states to keep their nuclear arsenals indefinitely and consequently the indefinite extension of the NPT does not mean in any way the indefinite possession of nuclear weapons. Let's bear in mind that in the NPT 2010 Review Conference the Non Aligned Movement proposed the adoption of a legal framework with specified timelines for the total elimination of nuclear weapons by 2025. Therefore the three pillars of the NPT should not be narrowed down to just the non-proliferation. The two other pillars are equally important and should have the same weight in regime building including institutions, regulations and commitments. Nuclear energy is not equating with nuclear weapons and as a result the right of all states for peaceful nuclear activities should be guaranteed. Monopolizing selfishly the scientific knowledge and the technology of peaceful nuclear energy and depriving others from it through various means including atrocious assassination of scientists is an illusion which will certainly not lead to the preservation of their perceived supremacy.

Mr. President,

The *raison d'etre* of the CD is disarmament. The agenda of

the CD is designed in a manner that facilitates the start of negotiation of concerted and jointly reinforcing international instruments for nuclear disarmament. Therefore the early commencement of the negotiations, within the CD, on a phased programme for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons with a specified framework of time, through a Nuclear Weapons Convention is the urgent need of the disarmament machinery today. If we start negotiation of the nuclear weapon convention in the CD, we would be in a position to comprehensively tackle all the core issues in the agenda of the CD in a comprehensive and balanced manner. As I proposed last year in this chamber, this convention could be a framework treaty encompassing total ban on use, production, possession, development, stockpiling, deployment, and transfer of nuclear weapons, renouncing the deterrence values of nuclear weapons in the defense doctrines, irreversible elimination of all stocks of weapon grade fissile material, de-alerting of nuclear warheads and their destruction in a verifiable manner in a phased program and within a specific time frame.

The piecemeal approach is no solution to achieve a world free from nuclear weapons. In fact, in the initial stages of negotiation of BWC and CWC, the ban on those categories of weapons of mass destruction was considered somehow ambitious, unpractical and unfeasible. But through the mobilization of necessary political will at the global level, international community was able to resolve many fundamental differences over issues which apparently seemed insurmountable.

Mr. President,

You are well aware of the desire of the majority of the countries in the region to establish a Nuclear Weapon Free Zone in the Middle East. Iran and Egypt are among the most eager advocates of establishing such a zone in the region. However the

possession of nuclear weapons by the only non-party to the NPT in the region, which makes it a serious threat to the stability of the entire region and international peace and security, is the only obstacle in the way of creation of such a zone. Its repeated records in the constant use of inhumane weapons against civilians have furthermore intensified the security concerns in the region. It is a matter of concern that all efforts to establish a nuclear weapon free zone in the Middle East have not yet succeeded, due to its persistent refusal to join the NPT and to place its nuclear facilities under the IAEA Safeguards System. It is matter of more concern that in its defiance of the demands of the international community, it enjoys the full support of some nuclear weapon states. Hypocrisy, selectiveness and discrimination describe well the behaviors of some major powers towards the region. The members of the NPT are punished while those who are outside the NPT are rewarded generously.

I would like to re-emphasize that we do not see any glory, pride or power in the nuclear weapons, quite the opposite based on the religious decree issued by our supreme leader, the production, possession, use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, are illegitimate, futile, harmful, dangerous and prohibited as a great sin. We have clearly stated time and again that there are two alternatives in dealing with the Iranian peaceful nuclear program: one way is engagement, cooperation and interaction, and the other is confrontation and conflict. The Islamic Republic of Iran, confident of the peaceful nature of its nuclear program, has always insisted on the first alternative. When it comes to our relevant rights and obligations, our consistent position is that Iran does not seek confrontation, nor does it want anything beyond its inalienable legitimate rights. What we are looking for, is justice and the refusal of double standards.

In conclusion, Mr. President, we urge all countries to be

united and work together for total elimination of all nuclear weapons to pave the way for *Sustainable Security*. I have the confidence that this august body can have an important contribution in this respect. The Islamic Republic of Iran stands prepared for further engagement in a constructive negotiation in this regard.

I thank you Mr. President