

Islamic Republic of **I R A N**

Permanent Mission to the United Nations

Statement by H.E Dr. Kamal Kharrazi, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the Seventh NPT Review Conference 3 May 2005, New York

In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

Mr. President,

Despite the difficulties that the non-proliferation regime has historically faced, we can generally assess that the NPT has been successful in containing the number of nuclear-weapon States. Without the NPT, there would have certainly been more nuclear weapons in the hand of more countries in the world. This in turn would have put our planet at greater risk of more insecurity and instability.

On the other hand, the Treaty has not been successful in attaining the objective of nuclear disarmament as it has been called for in its Article VI. The continued existences of thousands of nuclear warheads in the nuclear-weapon States' stockpiles, which can destroy the entire globe many times over, are the major sources of threat to global peace and security. Unfortunately, the limited efforts of the two major nuclear-weapon States right after the Cold War to reduce their nuclear arsenals have faced serious setbacks, particularly in recent years. Nuclear weapons continue to be deployed in other countries; a fact that exacerbates the situation.

Following the major efforts by States Parties to strengthen the Treaty, the 2000 NPT Review Conference welcomed enthusiastically "the unequivocal undertakings by the Nuclear-Weapon States to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals leading to nuclear disarmament, to which all States Parties are committed under Article VI". Accordingly, the Conference adopted the 13 practical steps for the systematic and progressive efforts to implement Article VI.

This Conference has a special responsibility to review the implementation

of these practical steps and of the requisite measures to strengthen and complement them. Failure to embark upon a full-scope review of the implementation of those steps would only result in the frustrations of the international community over the total indifference of nuclear-weapon States to the wishes of international community to make progress towards nuclear disarmament. This could potentially amount to unraveling of the fabric, credibility and authority of the NPT.

But engagement in such a process requires us to face an unpleasant reality; and the reality is that no progress has been achieved in implementing the 13 practical steps. On the contrary, measures have been adopted and implemented which run against the letter and spirit of those obligations. This Conference should concentrate, therefore, much of its efforts to consolidate the 13 steps, by a thorough appraisal of their implementation and rectifying the areas that impede their realization.

In a nutshell, the following developments must be fully taken into account in our appraisal:

1. Concerns continue to remain over the research and development of new non-strategic and low-yield nuclear weapons. Commitments need to be renewed to ban developments of new nuclear weapon systems.
2. The principle of irreversibility should be applied to all unilateral, bilateral and multilateral nuclear disarmaments. The nuclear-weapon States should ensure that irreversibility would apply also to their existing measures in removing the warheads from the nuclear weapon systems.
3. Effective steps should be taken to lower the operational status of nuclear weapons to reduce nuclear war. Consequently, there should be a commitment to revise nuclear doctrines, policies and postures to reflect such lowered operational status.
4. Development of national missile defense systems would instigate new arms race in outer space and should be avoided. Fresh efforts should be made within the CD to negotiate the arrangements to prevent arms race in outer space. In the meantime the nuclear-weapon States should make a commitment in this Conference to make every effort to prevent such an arms race.
5. Unilateral nuclear disarmament measures should be pursued vigorously and go well beyond removing warheads from deployment.
6. Submission of more detailed information, *inter alia*, on the total current numbers of nuclear weapons, the numbers and yield of their warheads, the plan for the deployment and development of missile defense, and the inventories of fissile materials for weapon purposes, are expected from the nuclear-weapon States as a confidence building measure and

transparency.

7. The negotiation on a verifiable fissile material cut off treaty needs to be started at the CD within its overall program of work.

Mr. President,

I would like to recall that the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) legally prohibit the use of these two categories of weapons of mass destruction. But contrary to the legitimate expectations of the international community, prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons, as the most destructive and catastrophic weapons, is yet to be affirmed through the conclusion of a legally-binding instrument. Unfortunately, against the backdrop of this existing gap, some nuclear-weapon States are developing new and more easy-to-use nuclear weapons. I would like, hereby, to echo the proposal of the civil society for legal prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons within the context of this NPT Review Conference.

In the same vein, the unfulfilled commitments and promises on a legally binding instrument on Negative Security Assurances in the framework of the 1995 package of Decisions and the 2000 Final Document needs to be materialized in this Conference. The 2000 Review Conference, under the Chapter on "Article VII" of its Final Document reaffirmed that total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only absolute guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, and agreed that legally binding security assurances by the five nuclear-weapon States to the non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the NPT strengthen the non-proliferation regime, and called upon the Preparatory Committee to make recommendations about it to the 2005 Review Conference.

We regret that the Preparatory Committee was disabled from producing such recommendations. It is abhorrent that during the same period, the dangerous doctrine of use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear states and threats were officially proclaimed by the United States and NATO.

Therefore, we propose that the Conference would establish an AD-Hoc Committee to work on a draft legally binding instrument on providing security assurances by the five nuclear-weapon States to non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the Treaty, and to submit the draft of the legal instrument to the next Review Conference for its consideration and adoption.

As a first step to address the twin issues of illegality of use and NSA, we believe that as suggested by the NGO community this conference should adopt a decision through which the Conference "decides that the threat or use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States shall be prohibited."

Mr. President,

The inalienable right of the States to develop nuclear technology for peaceful purposes emanates from the universally accepted proposition that scientific and technological achievements are the common heritage of mankind. Nuclear technology has been recognized as a source of energy and a viable option within the sustainable development policies with broad applications in the field of food and agriculture, human health, power generation and industry, water resource management and environment. The promotion of the use of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes has been, therefore, one of the main pillars of the NPT and the main statutory objective of the IAEA.

It is unacceptable that some tend to limit the access to peaceful nuclear technology to an exclusive club of technologically advanced States under the pretext of non-proliferation. This attitude is in clear violation of the letter and spirit of the Treaty and destroys the fundamental balance which exists between the rights and obligations in the Treaty. The Treaty itself has clearly rejected this attempt in its Article IV by emphasizing that "nothing in the Treaty shall be interpreted as affecting the inalienable right of all Parties to the Treaty to develop research, produce and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination."

Let me make it absolutely clear that arbitrary and self-serving criteria and thresholds regarding proliferation-proof and proliferation-prone technologies and countries can and will only undermine the Treaty. Iran, for its part, is determined to pursue all legal areas of nuclear technology, including enrichment, exclusively for peaceful purposes and has been eager to offer assurances and guarantees that they remain permanently peaceful. But, no one should be under the illusion that objective guarantees can theoretically or practically amount to cessation or even long term suspension of legal activity which have been and will be carried out under the fullest and most intrusive IAEA supervision. Cessation of legal activity is no objective guarantee against so-called break-out; it is indeed a historically tested recipe for one.

The implementation of Article IV of the Treaty has been assured by the commitment of the States Parties to Article I and II as well as the implementation of the IAEA safeguards. The IAEA full-scope safeguard system provides the main foundation and basis for preventing the diversion of peaceful nuclear technology to nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. The IAEA has been recognized by the previous NPT Conferences as "the competent authority to verify and assure compliance with the safeguards agreements" and to consider and investigate concerns regarding non-compliance.

The difficulty arises and gets worse when, in practice, the non-Parties to the Treaty which are supposed to be under special restrictions have been rewarded at least by acquiescence to have unrestricted access to materials, equipment and technology, while States Parties to the Treaty under the IAEA safeguards have been under extensive restrictions. In the case of the Middle East, provision of such unrestricted access to one non-party to the NPT has effectively contributed to the development of one of the largest stockpiles of nuclear weapons which has endangered regional and global peace and security. Israel has continuously rejected the calls by the international community and more particularly the NPT Conferences to accede to the NPT and place its facilities under the IAEA full scope safeguards.

Mr. President,

This conference would be succeeded if we act together and focus our efforts towards major issues of high importance. Non-proliferation, disarmament and peaceful use are the pillars of the Treaty. The international community has lent this responsibility to each of us to preserve the integrity of the Treaty and promote its implementation. This would be achieved if we take appropriate decisions on:

- 1 Concrete steps towards ensuring universality of the NPT;
- 2 Realization of the commitment by Nuclear Weapons States not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against Non-Nuclear Weapons States parties to the Treaty through concluding a legally binding instrument;
- 3 Ensure and promote the basic rights of states parties to unhindered access to use nuclear technology for peaceful purposes without discrimination;
- 4 Reconfirm the undertakings by Nuclear-Weapon States to implement 13 practical steps towards nuclear disarmament;

Today, the credibility of the NPT is at stake. The Treaty faces new challenges which we need to effectively address. However, the fact is that this Treaty with whatever shortcomings it may have and the deficiencies in its implementation process provides the only internationally viable foundation for curbing the proliferation of nuclear weapons and attaining the goal of nuclear disarmament. I sincerely hope that the deliberations of this conference could assist us to consolidate the foundations of this Treaty in the circumstances that global security system more than ever requires wise and brave decisions to salvage the credibility of the Treaty.

Thank you Mr. President.