

2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

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Establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons

Working paper submitted by the Islamic Republic of Iran

1. The Islamic Republic of Iran attaches great importance to, and strongly supports, the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons, an idea which was first presented by Iran in 1974. After a lapse of 20 years following the adoption of the Resolution on the Middle East in the context of the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, its objective — to establish a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons — remains unfulfilled. As a result, the retention of nuclear weapons by the Israeli regime continues to threaten the security of States parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty in the Middle East as well as overall regional peace and stability. Iran expresses its deep concern over the persistent delay in the implementation of the 1995 resolution.

2. Iran supported the adoption of the Resolution on the Middle East by the 1995 Review and Extension Conference. Since 1995, Iran has always called for the early implementation of this resolution. In this context, with the aim of making its contribution to the establishment of a Middle East free from nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, Iran has taken practical steps by acceding to the Non-Proliferation Treaty, the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction (Biological Weapons Convention) and the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction (Chemical Weapons Convention) as well as by signing the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. The country's track record testifies to its strong commitment to the objective of the realization of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons as well as other weapons of mass destruction.

3. Moreover, Iran supported the adoption, at the 2010 Review Conference, of a plan of action on the implementation of the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East. Since then, Iran has called for timely implementation of the plan of action which included, inter alia, an agreement to convene a regional conference in 2012 on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction. Iran also took many steps to that end, some of which are reflected in its national report submitted to the 2015 Review Conference, pursuant



to section IV, paragraph 9, of the “conclusions and recommendations for follow-on actions” of the 2010 Review Conference.

4. In the Final Document of the 2010 Review Conference, States parties renewed their resolve to undertake all necessary measures aimed at the prompt implementation of the 1995 resolution. However, just hours after the adoption of the 2010 Final Document, one of the co-sponsors of the 1995 resolution and co-conveners of the 2012 conference issued an official statement, dated 28 May 2010, in which it clearly set new conditions for the implementation of the 2010 agreement, stating:

Despite our agreement to the final document, we have serious reservations about one aspect of the Middle East resolution it contains. The final document includes an agreement to hold a regional conference in 2012 to discuss issues relevant to a Middle East zone free of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and their delivery systems. The United States has long supported such a zone, although **our view is that a comprehensive and durable peace in the region and full compliance by all regional states with their arms control and non-proliferation obligations are essential precursors for its establishment.** Just as our commitment to seek peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons will not be reached quickly, the US understands that a WMD free zone in the Middle East is a long-term goal (emphasis added).

5. On the other hand, one day after the conclusion of the 2010 Review Conference, the Israeli regime, in its statement of 29 May 2010, rejected outright the 2010 Final Document as “deeply flawed” and stated that “Israel will not be able to take part in its implementation”. Moreover, it took 16 months for the co-conveners of the 2012 conference to declare, on 14 October 2011, the appointment of the facilitator and the designation of the host Government for the conference.

6. Like all the other States parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty in the Middle East, Iran engaged constructively in several rounds of consultations with the facilitator of the conference on the preparatory process for the 2012 conference. On 6 November 2012, Iran officially declared its decision to participate in the conference, which was scheduled to be convened in Helsinki in December 2012.

7. On 23 November 2012, one of the co-conveners of the conference unilaterally cancelled the Helsinki conference without any prior consultation with States parties in the region. We believe that this was done to provide a cover for refusal of Israel to attend said conference.

8. While expressing deep concern and disappointment over the failure of the conveners of the 2012 conference to accomplish the mandate entrusted to them by the 2010 Review Conference, Iran strongly rejects all justifications raised by certain conveners for not convening the conference. The failure to convene the conference in 2012 violates the collective agreement of the States parties reached at the 2010 Review Conference and contravenes the letter and spirit of the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East. The conveners, in particular the three co-sponsors of the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East, are called upon to be accountable to the 2015 Review Conference.

9. The Israeli regime’s intransigent opposition to any international effort under United Nations auspices for the establishment of a Middle East zone free from

nuclear weapons continues to be the main obstacle to convening the Helsinki conference. It is crystal clear that the reason why the Israeli regime was not, and still is not, willing to participate in such a conference, the sole objective of which is the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear and all other weapons of mass destruction, is that the establishment of such a zone requires, first and foremost, the prompt and unconditional accession of Israel as a non-nuclear-weapon party to the Treaty, which would require it to renounce possession of its nuclear weapons and to place all of its clandestine nuclear activities and facilities under the comprehensive safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). We believe the nature of the Israeli regime, which is based on expansionism, occupation and aggression, is in inherent contradiction with the vision of a Middle East zone free from nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.

10. A short look at the practices of Israel in the Middle East region and its record in the field of disarmament and international security provides a clear picture of the seriousness of the security threat posed by this regime against the peace and security of the States parties to the Treaty in the Middle East and proves, once again, how essential and urgent the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear and all other weapons of mass destruction is for the maintenance of peace and security in the region and beyond. That record includes, but is not limited to, the following: during its lifetime, the Israeli regime has waged 17 wars, which means one war almost every four years; committed aggression against all of its neighbours, without exception; attacked several other non-neighbouring countries in the region and beyond; attacked the peaceful nuclear installations of two States parties to the Treaty in the Middle East, one case of which was strongly condemned by the Security Council as a clear violation of the Charter of the United Nations and the norms of international conduct; threatened to attack the peaceful nuclear facilities of States parties to the Treaty in the region that are under IAEA safeguards; still has under occupation the territories of several neighbouring countries, as it is called, in the United Nations resolutions, the “Occupying Power”; is not party to the Non-Proliferation Treaty or any other international instrument banning weapons of mass destruction, in defiance of repeated calls by the Security Council, the General Assembly, the IAEA General Conference, review conferences of the parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty, summit and ministerial conferences of the Non-Aligned Movement and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation; and is the only one in the region that is estimated to possess hundreds of nuclear warheads and all other types of weapons of mass destruction.

11. As stated, time and again, by the summit and ministerial conferences of the Non-Aligned Movement, “stability cannot be achieved in a region where massive imbalances in military capabilities are maintained particularly through the possession of nuclear weapons, which allow one party to threaten its neighbours, and the region”.

12. According to the aforementioned facts, Israel is the only obstacle to the implementation of the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East and the 2010 plan of action on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. This regime is not even willing to respond positively to repeated calls by the international community and to participate in a conference, the exclusive agenda and purpose of which is the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear and all other weapons of mass destruction, let alone its prompt and unconditional

accession, as a non-nuclear-weapon party, to the Non-Proliferation Treaty, which is one of the main requirements for the establishment of such a zone.

13. Given such realities, the only way to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East is for the international community to exert and maintain sustained pressure on Israel in order to compel it to accede, promptly and unconditionally, as a non-nuclear-weapon party, to the Non-Proliferation Treaty and to place all of its nuclear activities and installations under the IAEA full-scope safeguards. This approach was followed by the 2000 and 2010 Review Conferences, which reaffirmed “the importance of Israel’s accession to the Non-Proliferation Treaty and the placement of all its nuclear facilities under comprehensive IAEA safeguards, in realizing the goal of universal adherence to the Treaty in the Middle East”.

14. The realization of the fundamental objectives of the Non-Proliferation Treaty requires, in addition to the full and non-discriminatory implementation of all obligations under this instrument, the prompt and full implementation of the decisions taken by the review conferences, especially the implementation of the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East and the 2010 plan of action.

15. Therefore, the 2015 Review Conference should agree on concrete steps for the speedy implementation of the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East and the 2010 plan of action. In this context, it is recommended that the 2015 Review Conference establish a subsidiary body under Main Committee II to consider the urgent implementation of the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East and the 2010 plan of action. The 1995 resolution or the 2010 plan of action could constitute the basis for the development by the 2015 Review Conference of a plan of action and a timetable for the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction. Therefore, Iran is of the view that the prompt convening of a conference, under the auspices of the United Nations, on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction should be addressed and agreed upon at the 2015 Review Conference. Convening of such a conference shall not be held hostage to preconditions. Iran also proposes that the 2015 Review Conference should incorporate the following elements in its decision on the Middle East:

- *Reaffirming* the urgent need for the implementation of the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East and the 2010 plan of action;
- *Renewing* the strong resolve of all States parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty to undertake all necessary measures aimed at the prompt and full implementation of the 1995 resolution and 2010 plan of action;
- *Expressing appreciation* for the constructive engagement and the positive reactions of all States parties to the Treaty in the region towards the conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction, which was scheduled to be held in 2012, including the announcement of their decisions to participate therein;
- *Expressing deep concern* and disappointment over the fact that, owing only to the unwillingness of Israel to participate, the aforesaid conference was not convened;

- *Reaffirming* the importance of Israel's accession to the Treaty and the placement of all of its nuclear activities and facilities under the IAEA comprehensive safeguards in realizing the goal of universal adherence to the Treaty in the Middle East;
 - *Establishing* a standing committee, comprising the members of its Bureau, to follow up the implementation of the recommendations of the Review Conference concerning Israel's prompt accession to the Treaty and the placement of all its nuclear facilities under the IAEA full-scope safeguards, and to report to the 2020 Review Conference and its Preparatory Committee meetings;
 - *Reaffirming* the commitment of States parties to the Treaty to the effective prohibition of the transfer of all nuclear-related equipment, information, materials and facilities, resources or devices and the extension of know-how or any kind of assistance in the nuclear, scientific or technological fields to Israel as long as it is not a party to the Treaty and has not placed all its nuclear facilities under the IAEA full-scope safeguards.
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