

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

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Non-proliferation in all its aspects

Working paper submitted by the Islamic Republic of Iran

1. Nuclear weapons, as the most horrendous, inhumane and indiscriminate weapons ever developed, are unique in their destructive power, in the unspeakable human suffering they cause, in the impossibility of controlling their effects in time and space and in the threat they pose to the environment, to future generations and indeed to the very survival of humanity. As it is commonly agreed at the global level, the only absolute guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is their total elimination and assuring that they will never be produced again. Accordingly, nuclear disarmament has the highest priority in the field of disarmament.
2. Non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, as an internationally accepted interim measure, derives its legitimacy from the larger objective of nuclear disarmament. Therefore, non-proliferation of nuclear weapons can neither be regarded as an independent objective nor be reduced only to preventing the acquisition of nuclear weapons by non-nuclear-weapon States. While recognizing the importance of the non-proliferation objective and the accomplishments made in that field, in the view of the Islamic Republic of Iran, overemphasizing that the Treaty has no other objective than non-proliferation is counterproductive.
3. The Islamic Republic of Iran shares the view that nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament are mutually reinforcing. However, they can be regarded as mutually reinforcing only if the non-proliferation efforts are accompanied by parallel practical steps aimed at nuclear disarmament. Likewise, to be effective, nuclear non-proliferation measures shall in no way restrict the exercise of the inalienable right of the States parties to use and develop nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.
4. The review of the state of affairs in the implementation of the non-proliferation provisions of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons should be carried out, inter alia, in the light of the actual progress attained in the prevention of: horizontal and vertical proliferation; the upgrading of existing nuclear weapons; the development of new types of such weapons and their means of delivery; the construction of new facilities for the production of nuclear weapons or their means of delivery; the sharing of nuclear weapons with other countries and the provision of assistance to other States, directly or indirectly, to manufacture or



otherwise acquire nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices; the establishment and promotion of the effectiveness of the nuclear-weapon-free zones and nuclear-weapon-free status of concerned countries; the realization of the universality of the Treaty; and the improvement of universal, effective, unconditional and legally binding assurances to the non-nuclear-weapon States parties against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons under all circumstances.

5. In view of the aforementioned observations, the Islamic Republic of Iran attaches great importance to achieving the objective on non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and the full and non-discriminatory implementation of relevant provisions of the Treaty, as well as the relevant parts of the final documents of its Review Conferences.

6. The best way to ensure the realization of the non-proliferation objective of the Treaty is universal adherence to the Treaty and full compliance of all States parties with its provisions. The Treaty has yet to achieve universal membership. Failure to do so would undermine its effectiveness and credibility. As “zero” is called “the only safe number of nuclear weapons on the planet”, undoubtedly, zero is the only acceptable number of countries outside the Treaty. States parties to the Treaty have agreed that the universality of the Treaty is of utmost importance in the Middle East, where the nuclear weapons of the Israeli regime continue to threaten the region and beyond. It was based on such an agreement that the 2000 Review Conference reaffirmed “the importance of Israel’s accession to the Non-Proliferation Treaty and the placement of all its nuclear facilities under comprehensive [International Atomic Energy Agency] IAEA safeguards, in realizing the goal of universal adherence to the Treaty in the Middle East”. That agreement was reiterated by the 2010 Review Conference.

7. Moreover, through its action 23, the 2010 Review Conference called “upon all States parties to exert all efforts to promote universal adherence to the Treaty, and not to undertake any actions that can negatively affect prospects for the universality of the Treaty”. Contrary to the 2010 Action Plan and in violation of their obligation under article III, paragraph 2, of the Treaty, nuclear cooperation between a certain nuclear-weapon State and the Israeli regime has continued unabated. Moreover, the decision of the so-called Nuclear Suppliers Group, consisting of a limited number of State parties to the Treaty, in authorizing nuclear cooperation between its members and a non-party to the Treaty constitutes a clear breach of the commitment made under paragraph 12 of decision 2 of the 1995 Review and Extension Conference, entitled “Principles and objectives for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament”, and paragraph 36 of the Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference, in which States parties agreed that any new supply arrangements for the transfer of nuclear material or equipment should require, as a necessary precondition, acceptance of International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) full-scope safeguards and internationally legally binding commitments not to acquire nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. Such acts are having adverse effect on prospects for achieving the universality of the Treaty by sending a wrong message that being a non-party to the Treaty is more privileged than being a non-nuclear-weapon State party to the Treaty.

8. Both the sharing of nuclear weapons between the nuclear-weapon States themselves and between them and non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the Treaty, the living example of which is the sharing of nuclear weapons within a certain

military alliance, are clear violations of the explicit obligations of concerned States parties under articles I and II of the Treaty. The Review Conference should address that violation, which undermines the credibility of the Treaty, and make practical decisions to rectify it.

9. The establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in different parts of the world and the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free status by a certain country, which led to the absence of nuclear weapons in the respective territories of that State and those parties to the treaties establishing such zones, are indeed other achievements in preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons. They indeed contribute to the objectives of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, but are not a substitute for other non-proliferation measures or for the total elimination of nuclear weapons worldwide. At the same time, they are not enough for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free world. Other challenges with regard to such zones are, inter alia, the abstention of certain nuclear-weapon States from granting full, effective, non-discriminatory, unconditional and irrevocable legally binding security assurances to all the parties to treaties establishing such zones against the threat or use of nuclear weapons under all circumstances, as well as the absence of political will by certain non-parties to the Treaty in support of the establishment of such zones in other parts of the world. The refusal of the Israeli regime to participate in the implementation of the resolutions and decisions on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East is a living example in that context.

10. Likewise, the ongoing measures and plans of all nuclear-weapon States to modernize or upgrade their nuclear weapon arsenals, and of certain nuclear-weapon States to develop new types of such weapons, including new types of tactical nuclear weapons, which reduces the threshold for their use and increases the possibility and risk of their use, are other sources of grave concern with regard to nuclear disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. That trend continues to adversely affect the effectiveness of the Treaty and undermine its object and purpose, and needs to be effectively addressed by the Review Conference.

11. The Islamic Republic of Iran is of the view that the only non-proliferation measures that can be considered effective and in line with the realization of the objective of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons are measures that are carried out in parallel to each other and, in practice, prevent completely the spread of nuclear weapons to geographical areas beyond the territories of the nuclear-weapon States; halt the provision of assistance, directly or indirectly, to other countries, whether they are parties to the Treaty or not, to manufacture or otherwise acquire or take control over nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices; and prevent the development of any new types of nuclear weapons or the upgrading of existing nuclear weapons, as it would be paradoxical to prevent the geographical proliferation of nuclear weapons and reduce their number, but preserve the same or higher destructive power. What essentially matters in the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons is not the prevention of their spread or reduction of their number only, but limiting their geographical scope, number, destructive power and the possibility of their use. Therefore, to be effective, non-proliferation measures, in addition to limiting the geographical scope of nuclear weapons, should reduce the number and destructive power of such weapons and the possibility of their use too.

12. At the same time, as the ultimate objective of all nuclear non-proliferation measures is nuclear disarmament, which, as has been said by many States, is itself the most effective measure against the proliferation of nuclear weapons, such steps should result in advancing the overall objective of nuclear disarmament and the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free world.

13. One of the alarming trends in the implementation of the Treaty and in its Review Conferences is the attempt, by certain States parties and using non-proliferation as a pretext, aimed at restricting, directly or indirectly, the exercise of the inalienable right of the States parties to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. As the Treaty itself clearly states, “nothing in this Treaty shall be interpreted as affecting the inalienable right of all the Parties to the Treaty to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination”, and all such measures should be considered as clear violations of the letter and spirit and object and purpose of the Treaty, and its persistence, without doubt, would continue to hamper “the economic or technological development of the Parties or international cooperation in the field of peaceful nuclear activities, including the international exchange of nuclear material and equipment for the processing, use or production of nuclear material for peaceful purposes” which, according to the Treaty, shall be avoided by all the parties. The Islamic Republic of Iran is of the view that no genuine non-proliferation measure can or should limit or suspend, partly or in full, any element of the inalienable right of all the parties under article IV of the Treaty, let alone use non-proliferation as a pretext to violate that right. That issue needs to be effectively addressed by the Review Conference.

14. The 2015 Review Conference of the Treaty is expected to review the progress made in the implementation of the Treaty provisions regarding non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, as well as related parts of the final documents of its Review Conferences, and take appropriate decisions thereon. To that end, the Islamic Republic of Iran proposes the following elements for their incorporation into the section on nuclear non-proliferation of the final document of the 2015 Review Conference:

Reaffirming that full and effective implementation of the obligations under the Treaty on not transferring to any recipient whatsoever nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices or control over such weapons or explosive devices, directly or indirectly, and not in any way to assist, encourage or induce any non-nuclear-weapon State to manufacture or otherwise acquire nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, or control over such weapons or explosive devices, is essential for achieving the objective of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and the universality of the Treaty;

Confirming the continued validity of all decisions on non-proliferation of nuclear weapons agreed to at the Review Conferences of the Treaty until all their objectives are achieved;

Confirming the commitment of concerned nuclear-weapon States to put an immediate end to nuclear-weapon-sharing;

Confirming also the commitment of all nuclear-weapon States to cease completely, and no later than 2020, all plans aimed at upgrading and refurbishing their existing nuclear weapon systems and their means of delivery, developing new types of nuclear weapon systems and constructing any new facility for the

development, deployment and production of nuclear weapons and their means of delivery at home and abroad;

Underlining that States parties to the Treaty, in conformity with its provisions, shall avoid using non-proliferation as a means to impose restrictions or limitations on the peaceful nuclear activities of other States parties, including the fullest possible exchange of equipment, materials and scientific and technological information for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.
