Mr. Chairman,

In 1978, the General Assembly in the Final Document of the SSOD-I affirmed that the immediate goal, in the area of disarmament, is the elimination of the threat of nuclear weapons and unanimously accorded “the highest priority” to “effective measures of nuclear disarmament”.

After nearly 40 years, there are still thousands of nuclear weapons that threaten annihilation of humanity, intentionally or by accident. And the objective of elimination of nuclear threat appears as far away as it was then and even further because nuclear weapon States instead of complying with their legally binding nuclear disarmament obligations under the NPT, have mostly taken an opposite direction and work towards upgrading their stockpiles and developing newer and more effective nuclear warheads. The complete lack of progress can best characterize the state of affairs with respect to the implementation of nuclear disarmament commitments.

Dissatisfaction among non-nuclear weapon States with this situation has reached to an unprecedented level. Widespread dissatisfaction voiced at the United Nations General Assembly High-level Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament in 2013, the Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons in 2014 and the 2015 NPT Review Conference bear strong testimony to the deep frustration of the international community and the non-nuclear weapon States with the consequences of the existing approach of nuclear weapon States towards nuclear disarmament.

Under these circumstances, in this session of the committee two different draft resolutions (L. 13/Rev.1 and L. 28/Rev.1) are submitted by non-nuclear weapon States with the aim of creating a momentum for advancing the objective of nuclear disarmament through the establishment of two open-ended working groups, one in Geneva and one in New York, with almost similar mandate but operating under different working methods. These two draft resolutions demonstrate that there is a
strong feeling and interest among non-nuclear weapon States for breaking the current impasse and status quo in the field of nuclear disarmament.

In this context, the Islamic Republic of Iran, as always, is determined to engage actively in all international diplomatic and legal efforts towards nuclear disarmament. To this end, my delegation has submitted the draft resolution L.28/Rev.1 entitled “effective measures on nuclear disarmament”.

In the past four weeks, much has been said about competition between draft resolutions L.28 and L.13. Undoubtedly, perception of competition is not correct. Allow me to briefly outline the rationale for proposing L.28.

As the gap between the nominal commitment to nuclear disarmament and the implementation thereof is becoming wider, the gap between the positions of nuclear weapon States and non-nuclear weapon States is also growing wider and deeper than ever. Mistrust between nuclear and non-nuclear weapon States is dominant in all relevant meetings, not mention the increasing mistrust between nuclear weapon States themselves. If this trend remains unaddressed, it could have extensive ramification for the NPT which is the foundation of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. It is imperative to work hard in order to bridge this gap and to try to rebuild trust among NPT member States for the sake of maintain the credibility of the Treaty. Undoubtedly, the most effective solution is systematic and progressive implementation of nuclear disarmament obligations and the commencement of negotiations in the CD and conclusion of agreement or agreements on nuclear disarmament. And this requires firm political determination. However, this is not happening. In these conditions, we need to hold serious and sustained discussions in an inclusive and result-oriented manner as to what other legal instruments and provisions are required for achieving the total elimination of nuclear weapons. This is a step that in any case we need to take either now or in the near future.

In the aftermath of the failure of the NPT Review Conference, we believe there exists a unique opportunity for conducting such a focused and serious discussion among all member States of the United Nations to identify, elaborate and recommend effective measures on nuclear disarmament, including legal provisions that are required for achievement and maintenance of a world free of nuclear weapons. For this reason, four sessions of 10 working days each have been envisaged for the open-ended working
group to be established by L. 28. This means 40 days of extensive discussion and elaboration of recommendation within two years in New York on effective measures on nuclear disarmament.

Now let me turn to the reason why L. 28 offers a consensus-based approach. As underlined in paragraph 28 of the Final Document of SSOD-I, nuclear weapon States have the primary responsibility for nuclear disarmament and it is therefore important to secure their active participation in any nuclear disarmament endeavor particularly when it comes to negotiations and dialogue. This important point justifies the need for a consensus-based approach. Consensus rule is only a means to assure all participating States that their voice will be appropriately taken into account during the process.

From the beginning of this session and during all informal consultations on L.28, we have consistently stated that the logic of this consensus-based approach is to secure active participation of nuclear weapon States in the process. Regrettably, at this stage of the work of the Committee, after listening to the statement made by distinguished representative of France, on behalf of P5, it is evident that nuclear weapon States are not willing at all to commit themselves to a consensus-based and inclusive approach. In the absence of such willingness which is essential for having a meaningful and comprehensive discussion on nuclear disarmament in the framework of the United Nations, there will be no justification for keeping this proposal on the table. Therefore, my delegation after informing the co-sponsors of the draft, has decided to withdraw its proposal as contained in L.28/Rev.1 from the agenda of Committee in accordance with Rule 80 of the Rules of Procedure.

I thank you Mr. Chairman.