Explanation of Vote on Draft Resolution L.41
by the Delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran

In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

I would like to explain the position of my delegation regarding draft resolution L.41 on “Taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations”.

The Islamic Republic of Iran voted in favor of L.41 in line with its principle position to support all multilateral activities aimed at the promotion and realization of the nuclear disarmament objective.

However, we would like to put on record our main observations on the main proposal of L.41 and the procedure envisaged to take forward that proposal.

First, multilateral negotiations on nuclear disarmament should be carried out in the Conference on Disarmament as the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating body. Fully sharing the frustration over the two decade-long stalemate in the CD, we strongly believe that the main problem within the CD, i.e. the lack of genuine political will by certain nuclear-weapon States to achieve progress on nuclear disarmament, will not be solved by undermining its authority.

Second, based on our principled position that, due to delicate and multidimensional nature of disarmament issues, as well as their close relations with supreme national security interests of States, negotiations of any international instrument on such issues must be conducted based on consensus, we strongly believe that, in conducting its business, the proposed 2017 Conference, as a principle rule, should exhaust every effort to reach agreement on substantive matters by consensus. This, fortunately, not only is allowed by the Rules of Procedure of the UNGA, but also is the basic rule that was practiced in the past by the United Nations in holding international conferences, and the proposed 2017 Conference is not and should not be an exception.

Recalling that the Rules of Procedure of the UNGA allows voting on substantive issues, but it does not oblige the Member States to resort to voting, my delegation would like to underscore the importance of taking into account this fact and call for avoiding any hasty or imprudent proposals to resort to voting at any stage of the work of the proposed Conference.

In this context, my delegation believes that we should not lose sight of the fact that what international community of States have already achieved in terms of agreement on commitments and obligations on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, as well as the existing international instruments banning biological and chemical weapons, have been the product of painstaking negotiations based on the rule of consensus. This has enabled us to hold accountable those that do not comply with the international commitments and obligations which they themselves have agreed to.

Third, on the proposed legally binding instrument, we expect that, at minimum, negotiations would result in the conclusion of an international instrument which would comprehensively and forever prohibit the research on and the possession, development, production, testing, transfer, modernization and use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, under any circumstances. Moreover, such an instrument, in no way, should legitimize the existence of nuclear weapons or their
continued possession. The possession of nuclear weapons is unlawful and illegitimate at the present time and must remain so in the future under the proposed legally binding instrument. Additionally, the UNGA resolution for adopting such an instrument should contain a clear decision that, it should be complemented by an identical instrument providing for the total elimination of nuclear weapons, the negations of which shall be started immediately after the conclusion of the first instrument.

As a country which is under the nuclear threat of the Israeli regime, Iran's vital interest in, and its commitment to, achieving the total elimination of nuclear weapons is undoubtable. We share the view that the total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only absolute guarantee against their threat or use. We will actively participate in the proposed Conference based on the above-mentioned principled position.