(Please check against delivery)

Statement by Mr. Seyed Mohammad Ali Robatjazi,
Director, Office for disarmament and Non-Proliferation Affairs, Islamic Republic of Iran
Before the First Committee of the United Nations General Assembly
On “Nuclear Weapons”
New York, 22 October, 2018
---------

In the Name of God, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation associates itself with the NAM statement delivered by Indonesia.

Iran’s strong support for nuclear disarmament is based on two fundamental convictions:

First: nuclear weapons constitute the most serious threat for the survival of humankind and any use of nuclear weapons would have catastrophic humanitarian consequences.

Second: our deep concern regarding the continued failure to comply with nuclear disarmament obligations under the NPT’s Article VI, which has created a crisis of confidence in the Treaty’s capacity and ability to deliver its promise of nuclear disarmament.

Actions and policies that are completely incompatible with Article VI of the NPT and the objective of a world without nuclear weapons continue unabated, particularly by the United States.

As an example, the 2018 Nuclear Posture Review of the U.S. is fully and fundamentally incompatible with its obligations under the NPT for the following reasons:

- It emphasizes the utility of retaining nuclear weapons;

- It has increased the role of these inhumane weapons in the military doctrine of the U.S. by assigning new missions to them;

- It threatens to use nuclear weapons not only in a nuclear exchange but also against non-nuclear-weapons States parties to the NPT;

- It seeks to massively modernize and expand U.S. nuclear missiles, submarines and bombers. The United States plans to spend $1.2 trillion on a tremendous build-up of its nuclear arsenal. Such provocative plans should be considered a clear indication of, and an explicit invitation for, the start of a new nuclear arms race, and a violation of the U.S. nuclear disarmament obligations under the Treaty’s Article VI; and
It envisages development of new types of low-yield nuclear weapons to use them in regional conflict. The development of new mini-nukes not only indicates greater reliance on nuclear weapons but also, due to their characteristics, raises the temptation to use them.

As long as such irresponsible policies continue, there can be no hope for progress towards nuclear disarmament.

With consideration to all of this, the U.S. still continues preaching to others. This is a hypocritical policy. They must practice what they preach instead of preaching to others.

The recent announcement by the U.S. to withdraw from the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty is another step in further deteriorating the already complex situation, with respect to nuclear disarmament.

Under these circumstances, non-nuclear-weapon States should strengthen their unity; remain resolute; and work relentlessly towards the realization of a nuclear-weapon-free world. This is what we owe to our nations and future generations.

The adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons was a right step in the right direction. This should be complemented by the urgent commencement of negotiations and conclusion of a comprehensive convention on nuclear weapons.

Likewise, concrete practical measures on the total elimination of nuclear weapons need to be adopted in the 2020 NPT Review Conference.

Another deceitful policy of the U.S is its continued unconditional support for the possession of nuclear weapons by Israel. Such policies have emboldened the Israeli regime to the extent that now it brazenly threatens others with nuclear annihilation.

These irresponsible policies should not be tolerated any more. Countering the danger of the Israeli regime’s nuclear weapons is more urgent than ever. To that end, the 2020 NPT Review Conference must take practical steps for the realization of the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East.

In conclusion, I thank all distinguished delegates who rejected the U.S. withdrawal from the JCPOA. As rightly stated by many distinguished delegates, the JCPOA is an achievement of diplomacy and represents the effectiveness of multilateralism. Therefore, this strong support for the JCPOA should continue. The international community should not allow the US “withdrawal doctrine” to dominate international relations; it should not allow bullying to prevail diplomacy and multilateral institutions and instruments. This is in the interest of the sanctity of international agreements. Therefore, we have a collective responsibility in rejecting unilateralism and enhancing multilateralism.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.