Statement by
Delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran

Cluster III: Inalienable Right to Develop and Use of Nuclear Energy for Peaceful Purposes

Second Session of the Preparatory Committee of 2020 Review Conference of the
Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
Geneva, 1 May 2018

Mr. Chairman,

I associate my delegation with the NAM statement delivered by Indonesia.

The right to develop nuclear energy for peaceful purposes and to participate in the fullest possible exchange of equipment, materials and scientific and technological information for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy constitutes one of the fundamental objectives of the NPT. To ensure the realization of this right, article IV of the NPT obligates all States parties to facilitate such an exchange. All States parties, in particular those possessing advanced nuclear technology, equipment and scientific information, should fully comply with their legal obligations under article IV.

As stipulated in article IV, none of its provisions shall be interpreted as affecting the inalienable rights of States parties. The inalienable rights of the States parties include all areas of nuclear activities and technology for peaceful purposes, including enrichment and reprocessing activities and technology. In this regard, it was reiterated in the Final Documents of the 1985, 2000 and 2010 Review Conferences that each country’s choices and decisions in the field of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy should be respected and protected.

It is a matter of deep concern that certain States parties to the Treaty continue to impose arbitrary restrictions, based on political considerations, on the transfer of nuclear materials, equipment and technology for peaceful purposes. Regrettably such restrictions are imposed on States Parties where non-parties to the NPT with nuclear weapons program are benefiting from nuclear cooperation by certain NWSs.

Consistent with action 51 of the conclusions and recommendations for follow-on actions of the 2010 Review Conference, restrictions on transfer of nuclear materials, equipment and technology for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy to non-nuclear-weapons States parties to the NPT should be swiftly removed. Such restrictions under any pretext are in violation of the obligations under article IV. The 2020 Review Conference should consider the status of implementation of that recommendation by States parties participating in the export control regimes and, if necessary, require them to report to the Treaty’s review process on their actions in this regard.
All States parties to the Treaty have agreed in the context of NPT Review Conferences that in all activities designed to promote the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, preferential treatment should be given to the non-nuclear-weapon States party to the Treaty. In practice, States that are outside the Treaty and possess nuclear weapons appear to have the privilege of getting preferential treatment in nuclear cooperation.

Participants in the export control regimes like the NSG use the so-called proliferation concerns as a pretext to deny the access of developing non-nuclear-weapons States to nuclear equipment, materials and technology for peaceful uses, and the at the same time, they decide to allow nuclear cooperation between NSG participants and non-parties to the Treaty without obtaining internationally legally binding commitments from them not to acquire nuclear weapons.

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), as the principal specialized agency for nuclear technology transfer among the international organizations referred to in article IV (paragraph 2) of the Treaty, has an important role in contributing to international cooperation for the further development of the peaceful applications of nuclear energy.

The effective and successful operation of the Agency’s technical assistance and co-operation program is critical to performing its task in promoting nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. However, insufficient resources for that program and restrictions imposed by some States on the Agency have undermined the ability of IAEA to meet effectively its responsibilities in this regard. It is necessary to take practical steps to ensure that IAEA resources in this area are sufficient, assured and predictable.

Strengthening of the IAEA safeguards should not adversely affect the resources available for technical assistance and cooperation. The safeguards required under article III shall be implemented in a manner designed to comply with article IV, including the international exchange of nuclear materials and equipment.

The Islamic Republic of Iran takes serious the issue of nuclear safety. We are making good progress in the area of maintaining and enhancing appropriate and effective levels of safety in our nuclear facilities and activities. Consistent with Action 59 of the 2010 Action Plan on peaceful uses of nuclear energy, the government of the Iran has recently sent the bill of accession to the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of the Radioactive Waste Management to the Parliament for ratification. We also have engaged in cooperation with the Russian Federation and European Union in this area. Consistent with Action 63 of the 2010 Action Plan, we are reviewing the international instruments in the area of civil nuclear liability with a view to taking appropriate national decisions.

Thank you.