

2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

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Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East

Working paper submitted by the Islamic Republic of Iran

1. The Islamic Republic of Iran supports efforts to establish nuclear-weapon-free zones, pursuant to article VII of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, and believes that such zones contribute to the nuclear non-proliferation objective and enhance global and regional peace and security.
2. The Islamic Republic of Iran strongly supports the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. Iran originally presented the idea of a Middle East free of nuclear weapons in 1974 and remains committed to pursuing its realization.
3. The global concern regarding the threat of the acquisition of nuclear weapons by the Israeli regime has prompted international support for the proposal to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East and the adoption and initiation of several initiatives in international forums to advance this proposal, including through the United Nations and the Review Conferences of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.
4. The Islamic Republic of Iran has always supported and called for the speedy implementation of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East and the full realization of its objective in establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East.
5. Iran also supported the adoption of the 2010 plan of action on the Middle East, which called for the convening of a conference in 2012 on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction. On 6 November 2012, Iran officially declared its readiness to participate in that conference, which had been scheduled to be held in December 2012 in Helsinki.
6. Despite the strong support of the overwhelming majority of the States parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty, as well as the efforts by the Islamic Republic of Iran and all Arab countries in the region, the 1995 resolution and the 2010 action plan on the Middle East are yet to be implemented. The Islamic Republic of Iran expresses its deep concern over the persistent and long delay in the implementation of the 1995 resolution and the 2010 plan of action on the Middle East.



7. The Israeli regime has been the main obstacle to any progress towards the establishment of such a zone in the Middle East. Israel is the only one in the Middle East that has not acceded to the Treaty and refuses to place its nuclear facilities under the comprehensive safeguards regime of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Moreover, Israel refuses to implement the relevant international resolutions and seeks to impede all serious efforts to establish a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East.

8. The nuclear weapons in the hands of the Israeli regime constitute a serious threat to the security of the Middle East region and beyond. During its short history since inception, the Israeli regime has committed all international core crimes, including aggression against all its neighbours, war crimes, crimes against humanity and occupation of the territories of several neighbouring countries. This nefarious regime has recently threatened Iran with nuclear annihilation.

9. It is obvious that the Israeli intransigence and defiance of international norms, rules and decisions are not viable without the blind support of the United States. The United States actively assists and protects the illicit nuclear weapons of the Israeli regime, both materially and diplomatically, in violation of its international commitment. The Final Document of the 2010 Review Conference called upon all States to refrain from undertaking any measures that preclude the achievement of the objective of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East. However, the United States, which is a co-sponsor of the 1995 resolution and a co-convenor of the 2012 conference, by supporting the obstructive positions of the Israeli regime and setting preconditions for the implementation of the 2010 action plan, acted as a stumbling block in the way of convening the 2012 conference and, on 23 November 2012, unilaterally announced that the conference could not be convened and that it would not support a conference in which Israel would be subject to pressure. Furthermore, the 2015 Review Conference was unable to reach an agreement on its outcome document as a result of the objection of the United States of America to a decision contained therein on the implementation of the 2010 plan of action on the Middle East.

10. The international community should hold the Israeli regime accountable for its covert nuclear weapons programme and exert sustained pressure on the Israeli regime to compel it to accede, promptly and unconditionally, as a non-nuclear-weapon party, to the Treaty and to place all of its nuclear activities and installations under the full-scope IAEA safeguards.

11. The Islamic Republic of Iran stresses that achieving the objectives of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East is the collective responsibility of all States parties to the Treaty, in particular the nuclear-weapon States, especially the three depositary States of the Treaty that co-sponsored the 1995 resolution. It also underlines the urgent need for making progress towards the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. There should be no doubt that as long as the illicit nuclear weapons of the Israeli regime remain unaddressed, the risk of further nuclear proliferation in the Middle East will continue.

12. In this context and given the above-mentioned considerations, the tenth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons should:

(a) Express concern about the lack of progress towards the implementation of the 1995 resolution and the 2010 action plan on the Middle East;

(b) Reaffirm the urgent need for the prompt and full implementation of the 1995 resolution and the 2010 plan of action on the Middle East;

(c) Reiterate the firm commitment of all States parties to the Treaty and, in particular, the nuclear-weapon States, to undertake all necessary measures aimed at the prompt and full implementation of the 1995 resolution and the 2010 plan of action on the Middle East and to extend their cooperation in this regard;

(d) Express serious concern that the Israeli regime remains the only one in the region of the Middle East that has not joined the Non-Proliferation Treaty nor declared its intention to do so, and continues to operate unsafeguarded nuclear facilities in contravention of the non-proliferation regime and Security Council resolution 487 (1981);

(e) Express deep concern that the possession of nuclear weapons by the Israeli regime constitutes a serious threat to non-nuclear-weapon States in the Middle East, as well as to international peace and security;

(f) Call upon the Israeli regime to renounce possession of nuclear weapons and eliminate its entire stockpile of nuclear weapons, and deplore that the refusal of the Israeli regime to do so impedes the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East;

(g) Reaffirm that the accession of the Israeli regime to the Non-Proliferation Treaty without precondition and further delay and the placement of all of its nuclear activities and facilities under the comprehensive IAEA safeguards is essential in realizing the goal of universal adherence to the Treaty in the Middle East and the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East;

(h) Commit all States parties to the effective prohibition of the transfer of all nuclear-related equipment, information, materials and facilities, resources or devices and the extension of know-how or any kind of assistance in the nuclear field to the Israeli regime so long as it remains a non-party to the Treaty and has not placed all of its nuclear activities and facilities under the full-scope IAEA safeguards;

(i) Express its strong support for the process launched by the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction convened by the Secretary-General, pursuant to General Assembly decision 73/546, to elaborate a legally binding treaty on the establishment of the zone on the basis of consensus;

(j) Call upon all the invited parties to earnestly and constructively participate in the Conference, and request the Secretary-General to continue his efforts to ensure the convening of the Conference until its objectives are achieved and to report to the future sessions of the Review Conference and its Preparatory Committee on the implementation of General Assembly decision 73/546.