



**CHAIR OF
THE COORDINATING BUREAU
OF THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT**



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Statement by

H.E. Dr. Hassan Rouhani

President of the Islamic Republic of Iran

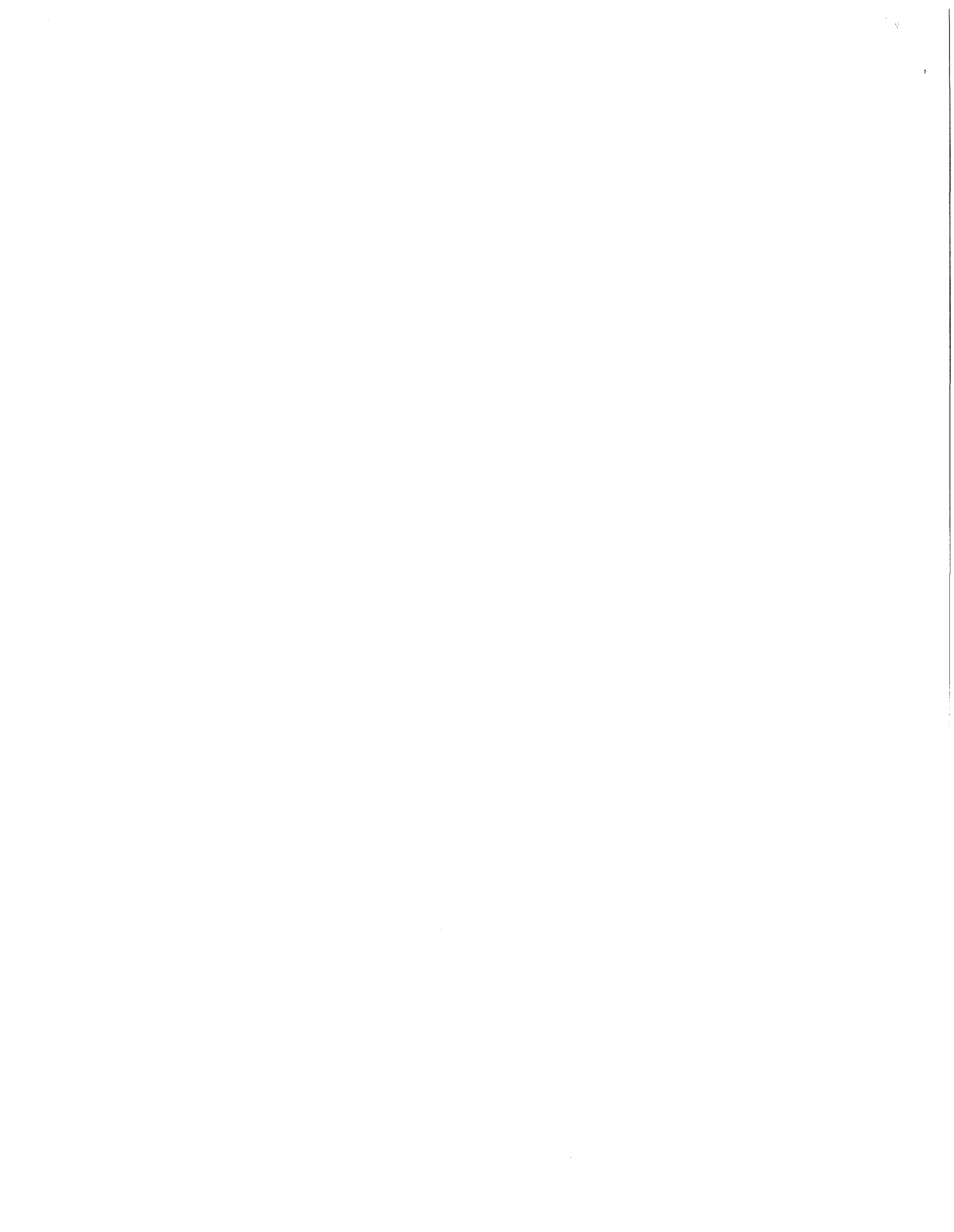
on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement

at the

High Level Meeting of the General Assembly

on Nuclear Disarmament

(New York, 26 September 2013)



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

Mr. President,

Mr. Secretary General,

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a special privilege to address this historic gathering. The participation of many world leaders in this first ever meeting of the Assembly on nuclear disarmament is indeed a clear manifestation of the wide support for this important subject. On behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement that initiated this meeting, I thank you all for your support.

I am also very grateful to you Mr. President, for your efforts and those of your predecessor in organizing this meeting. I also thank you, Mr. Secretary General, for your remarks.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

A peaceful and secure world remains a shared ideal for us all.

The horrors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki deepened our resolve to prevent the recurrence of such unspeakable death and destruction.

To that end, the very first resolution of this Assembly rightfully called for ridding the world of nuclear weapons. We have now an architecture of treaties, norms, and forums that aims to achieve this agreed goal. Yet, thousands of these weapons continue to pose the greatest threat to peace.

Steps for de-targeting, de-alerting or reducing the number of nuclear weapons are not a substitute for their total elimination.

Any use of nuclear weapons is a violation of the UN Charter and a crime against humanity. Doctrines justifying such use are unacceptable. Likewise, threatening non-nuclear-weapon States with nuclear weapons should be ended. Modernization of these weapons also undercuts efforts for their total abolition. These should therefore be stopped.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I wish to recognize the important contribution of some non-nuclear-weapon States to nuclear disarmament by voluntarily renouncing or dismantling nuclear weapons.

I also recognize the valuable contribution of nuclear-weapon-free zones to nuclear disarmament and international peace and security. I commend the seminal role of non-nuclear-weapon States, particularly NAM States, which make up the bulk of these zones.

The Movement calls upon all Nuclear-Weapon States to ratify related protocols to all treaties establishing such zones, withdraw any reservations or interpretative declarations incompatible with their object and purpose, and respect the de-nuclearization status of these zones.

NAM urges the early signing and ratification by the Nuclear-Weapon States of the Protocol to the Treaty on Southeast Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone and its related documents without reservations.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Almost four decades of international efforts to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East have regrettably failed. Urgent practical steps towards the establishment of such a zone are necessary. Israel, the only non-party to the Non-Proliferation Treaty in this region, should join thereto without any further delay. Accordingly, all nuclear activities in the region should be subject to the IAEA comprehensive safeguards.

The international community has to re-double its efforts in support of the establishment of this zone. This would constitute a contribution to the objective of nuclear disarmament. In this regard, I reaffirm that the NAM State Parties to the NPT urge the convening of the Conference on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, without any further delay, with the participation of all countries in the region to avoid unwanted consequences.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The World has waited too long for nuclear disarmament. The indefinite possession of nuclear weapons cannot be tolerated nor can their complete elimination be further delayed. Nuclear-weapon States have the primary responsibility for nuclear disarmament. I strongly urge them to comply with this long overdue legal obligation.

Fulfillment of nuclear disarmament obligations must not be delayed any further or held hostage to progress on non-proliferation or the perceived notions of strategic stability.

Nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation are mutually reinforcing. They should be pursued simultaneously, not one at the cost of the other. Non-proliferation derives its legitimacy from the larger objective of nuclear disarmament. It should be implemented in a comprehensive and non-discriminatory manner.

As long as nuclear weapons exist, the risk of their use, threat of use and proliferation persist. The only absolute guarantee is their total elimination. Pending that day, nuclear-weapon States should refrain from any threat or use of nuclear weapons against any non-nuclear-weapon State under any circumstances. The current declarations on negative security assurances are inadequate. They must be codified into a universal legal instrument.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Nuclear disarmament remains our highest priority. To take forward the nuclear disarmament agenda, the Movement proposes the following roadmap:

First, early commencement of negotiations, in the Conference on Disarmament, on a comprehensive convention on nuclear weapons for the prohibition of their possession, development, production, acquisition, testing, stockpiling, transfer, use or threat of use, and for their destruction.

Second, designation of 26 September every year as an international day to renew our resolve to completely eliminate nuclear weapons. We invite all governments and civil society, academia, and media to join hands in making this vision a reality.

Third, convening a High-level International Conference on Nuclear Disarmament in five years to review progress in this regard.

The Movement will present a resolution to this Assembly regarding this roadmap. I trust that it will enjoy your support.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

No nation should possess nuclear weapons; since there are no right hands for these wrong weapons, as you, Mr. Secretary General have rightly put it.

NAM is determined to make every effort to realize the vision of a nuclear-weapon-free world without further delay. Instead of nuclear weapons, let us invest in development and in eradicating poverty, ignorance, and diseases.

Let us bestow upon future generations a nuclear-weapon-free world. This is their right and our responsibility. Let us prove that we are the United Nations: nations united for peace.

I thank you Mr. President.

