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**Statement by
Heidar Ali Balouji
First Counselor of the Permanent Mission
of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the UN – New York
On**

Verification and Confidence Building through Implementation of the Treaty

**Before the Second Session of the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of
Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction
New York, 29 November – 3 December 2021**

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

Mr. President,

Verification and confidence-building measures pursue a common goal, which is ensuring full compliance with the obligations by the member states of a treaty. The scope of such a treaty in the Middle East demonstrates its implications here as well, and, therefore, the issue may seem simple but in all actuality is restrained.

There are a number of questions that should be taken into account in the elaboration of the treaty. Therefore, the related provisions should avoid any duplication while utilizing the existing mechanisms and providing for adequate verification of compliance with its provisions. It is most probable that having an independent verification mechanism for each treaty, other than huge financial implications, can lead to security consequences that should be avoided. However, relying on the existing mechanisms, among other privileges, can draw the attention of the international community to resolve any outstanding issues while the nature of the regional relationship may complicate resolving them.

Another observation is that the treaty will not be related to disarmament but to a non-proliferation treaty instead. In other words, prior to the implementation of the treaty, several important and necessary steps must be taken. Among others, accession to all related treaties and the disarmament of the possessor member states in advance must be a sine qua non for the entry into force of such a treaty in

the Middle East, which should be verified by the relevant international organizations.

From a practical perspective, up to now, the NPT and the other regional treaties of nuclear-weapon-free zones have chosen the IAEA to conduct verification activities through safeguard agreements on the member states' nuclear material and require them to meet international standards securing nuclear facilities. The Additional Protocol can be discussed within this framework, too.

Regarding chemical weapons, while the CWC has envisaged the most sophisticated verification mechanisms and the OPCW is the international body to implement the related provisions, as there has been no regional treaty on a zone free of chemical weapons, there was an absence of extended capacity to provide such authority to the OPCW at the regional level.

Furthermore, the BWC lacks any verification mechanism, and this is yet to be concluded if the US reservation to strengthen the Convention can be withdrawn.

These issues should be solved before the entry into force of the treaty and it is wise to choose the existing treaty and conventions as the default mechanisms for the Middle East treaty.

In addition to the technicalities surrounding the verification, a number of other confidence-building measures can serve their purpose. In this regard, clarification, consultation and cooperation are the best options, the efficacy of which has been proved. It requires emphasizing that these activities should neither be a precondition to implement the obligations nor to recognize and realize them in the realm of political affairs. They must also apply within the technical nature of the objectives of the treaty and can have further positive side effects though when implemented.

Last but not least, ensuring compliance with obligations and redressing the situation should be thought through effective options from collective measures to potential referral to the higher international bodies. Undoubtedly, these are cross-cutting issues that correspond with the competence of the international organization in charge of the implantation of the treaty.

I thank you, Mr. President.