Mr. Chairman,

I would like to associate myself with the statement made by the distinguished representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East continues to remain a strategic approach of my country for promoting peace, security and stability in this volatile region.

Despite all international efforts, unfortunately no progress has been made so far in the establishment of this zone.

It is crystal clear that the aggressive and expansionist policies of the Israeli regime, its large arsenal of nuclear and other sophisticated weapons, as well as its non-adherence to international law, norms and principles is the only obstacle to the establishment of such a zone.

Peace and stability cannot be achieved in the Middle East inasmuch as such an irresponsible regime has a massive nuclear arsenal, continues to threaten the region and beyond, is outside treaties banning WMD, in particular the NPT, continues underground nuclear weapon program, and defies the repeated calls by the international community to comply with international norms and principles.

Against this backdrop, to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, the international community has no choice but to exert utmost pressure on Israel to accede to the NPT as the first step.

Tens of UN General Assembly resolutions as well as final documents of successive NPT Review Conferences reaffirmed the importance of Israel's accession to the NPT and placement of all its nuclear facilities under comprehensive IAEA safeguards.
Full and prompt implementation of the 1995 Resolution and the 2010 NPT decision on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East are clear commitments undertaken by international community in particular by the cosponsors of the Resolution.

Neglecting this commitment can only embolden Israel to continue to remain a source of threat and instability by flouting the aspirations of the international community.

The failure to convene the 2012 conference on establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, due only to Israel's objection, is the product of longstanding inaction in regard to these commitments.

This unwelcome development seriously challenged the integrity and credibility of non-proliferation regime and the consensus agreements of successive NPT Revcons.

At the same time, expressions of deep concern over this issue and strong calls for early convening of the Conference, voiced by the overwhelming majority of political groups, States and civil society, during the third NPT prepcom, IAEA general Conference, UNGA HLM, UNGA general debate, CTBT Article 14 Conference, and here in the First Committee, made it crystal clear that the establishment of such a zone, proposed by Iran in 1974, enjoys continued strong international support.

Iran was among the first countries announcing its readiness to participate in the Conference. Iran will continue this policy. However, what we are expecting from such a conference is not merely a gathering of the countries in the region. An agreed plan of action and timetable for universality of the NPT in the Middle East should be the highest priority at any such Conferences.

Mr. Chairman,

The Islamic Republic of Iran has spared no efforts in supporting meaningful steps aimed at making progress towards the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East and will continue its strong support for the establishment of such a zone.

I thank you Mr. Chairman.