STATEMENT

BY

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OF THE 65TH SESSION OF THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

New York, 4 October 2010
Distinguished Mr. Chairman,

The First Committee meets today against the background of increasing progress in the area of disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation.

An important milestone in this area is the signing in April this year of the new Russian–American Treaty on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms. Of significance there have also been the Washington Nuclear Security Summit, as well as a successful Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty of the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and considerable efforts under the auspices of UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to launch substantive work of the Conference on Disarmament.

The new realities dictate a uniting agenda in international relations, because common challenges could only be counteracted through collective efforts and in a spirit of shared responsibility and indivisible security. The Russian Federation continues to support the central UN's role in accomplishing tasks of vital importance.

The most essential task is global intensifying of multilateral disarmament process. We welcome any initiatives to overcome the stalemate in this area.

In full accordance with obligations under Article VI of the NPT Russia seeks to achieve a historical goal of saving the mankind from nuclear threat. The common task of the international community is to create appropriate international conditions allowing to make progress in nuclear disarmament.

On April 8 the Treaty between the Russian Federation and the USA on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms was signed in Prague. Its underlying principles of equality, parity, equal and indivisible security of the Parties make it a new "gold standard" for concluding disarmament and arms control agreements.

The Treaty has been submitted for ratification. In Russia all necessary ratification procedures are being implemented in due course. The review of the Treaty by appropriate committees of the State Duma resulted in the adoption of
positive opinions on the draft federal law of ratification. We appreciated the information that the US Senate Committee on Foreign Relations had recommended to agree on the ratification of new START Treaty. We expect that later on Russian and American legislators will also consider the Treaty in parallel.

The Russian Federation has deliberately taken a contractual and legal approach to nuclear disarmament. Such an approach allows for the achievement of real, verifiable and irreversible limitation and reduction of nuclear weapons and their delivery means. In this regard, due account is taken of the whole range of political, economic and military factors affecting international security and stability. During this session together with our negotiation partners from the United States we intend to submit a draft resolution entitled "Bilateral strategic nuclear arms reductions and the new strategic framework". We hope that the draft resolution will be widely supported and adopted by consensus.

Deep reductions in strategic offensive arms undertaken by Russia and the USA lead to a qualitative change in the situation in the field of nuclear disarmament. The narrowing numeric gap between stockpiles of our countries and the other P-5 members creates an urgent need for other states possessing nuclear weapons to gradually join the disarmament efforts of Russia and the United States.

At the same time, we believe that nuclear disarmament should not be limited exclusively to the efforts of the States Parties to the NPT. At a certain stage further progress in disarmament will simply not be possible without the engagement of other states.

Also, the signing of new START has brought us to a point where considerable lowering of nuclear capabilities makes deeper reductions impossible without due regard to all other processes in the area of international security. Further steps towards nuclear disarmament should be considered and implemented in strict compliance with the principle of equal and indivisible security and taking into account all factors capable of affecting strategic stability. In particular, such factors include the development of regional missile-defense systems without taking into
consideration the security of neighboring states, possibility of placing weapons in outer space, development of strategic delivery vehicles in non-nuclear configuration, unilateral build-up in strategic missile-defense capabilities, growing imbalance of forces in the area of conventional arms, deployment of nuclear weapons in the territory of non-nuclear states etc.

The interrelationship between strategic offensive and strategic defensive arms that is becoming more important as strategic offensive arms are reduced is vital for strengthening strategic stability. We call for a broad international dialogue on missile-defense issues. Our goal is to establish a collective system to respond to missile-related challenges by countering missile proliferation and preventing the existing missile-related challenges from turning into real missile-related threats, as well as eliminating these threats through, primarily, political, diplomatic and economic measures.

Preventing the placement of any kind of weapons in outer space remains a foreign policy priority of Russia.

We are firmly convinced that outer space should not become an arena for armed confrontation. We are looking forward to the intensification of collective work on the draft treaty on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space (PPWT) submitted by Russia and China at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva and invite all states to become involved in that work.

In our view, the development of transparency and confidence-building measures (TCBMs) in outer space activities is a prerequisite to ensuring stability and security. The United Nations General Assembly at its 64th session for the first time adopted a relevant Russian-Chinese resolution without a vote. At the current session of the United Nations General Assembly Russia together with other countries will table a resolution on the TCBMs containing an idea of establishing a group of governmental experts (GGE) to examine, summarize and develop measures proposed by various UN member states, as well as to prepare an expert report and
recommendations on the implementation of such measures. We call on all delegations to support and co-sponsor our draft resolution.

Russia has consistently stood for the strengthening of nuclear non-proliferation regime. Provision of all possible assistance to the universalization and strengthening of the NPT as a pillar of the collective security system continues to be a systemic task.

The results of the NPT Review Conference confirm that the Treaty remains a starting point for consideration of international issues related to the creation of optimal algorithms of cooperation in the area of peaceful nuclear energy and establishment of high international standards of safety and prevention of the leakage of nuclear materials, equipment and relevant technologies, and their non-diversion to military purposes. We believe that all emerging non-proliferation challenges, including regional ones, can and must be addressed on the NPT basis.

I would like to draw your attention specifically to the need to find ways to implement previous decisions aimed at strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation regime in the Middle East. The NPT Review Conference held in May has managed - for the first time since the adoption of the Middle East resolution in 1995 - to agree on concrete steps that lay the foundation for a mechanism to start implementing in practice the establishment of a zone free of all weapons of mass destruction and their delivery means (WMDFZ) in the region. As a co-author of the 1995 Middle East resolution Russia is satisfied that they are based on the ideas and proposals that we had put forward earlier (convening a conference, appointment of a special coordinator, possible confidence-building measures).

We should assist in the development and universalization of the safeguards system of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Russia makes consistent efforts to that end and calls for the adoption of the Additional Protocol to the IAEA Safeguards Agreement as a universally recognized norm of verification of compliance by the NPT State Parties with their non-proliferation obligations.
We are very hopeful that the process of ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty by all key countries will be accelerated, which would allow to put it in force. We have all prerequisites for this, taking into account positive signals from the USA about the changed attitude towards this Treaty. We urge all states and first of all those on whom the CTBT’s entry into force depends to sign and ratify it as soon as possible.

We are looking forward to the earliest launching of negotiations on banning the production of weapons-grade fissile material at the Conference on Disarmament within a balanced program of work.

Russia stands for the universalization of the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism and involvement of new countries in the multilateral efforts implemented within the framework of the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism. The existing non-proliferation "safety net" that we have been creating for many years should be consistently strengthened.

Moving along the non-proliferation track and consistent efforts to eliminate its bottlenecks allowed us to create conditions to build a proliferation-resistant architecture of international cooperation in the area of peaceful uses of atomic energy, based on multilateral approaches to the nuclear fuel cycle. Russia hopes that the "replication" of sensitive technologies directly connected with the production of weapons-grade nuclear materials will be terminated and many countries will have an opportunity to realize their legitimate interest in the development of nuclear power. This is the aim of the Russian President’s global nuclear infrastructure initiative that includes the establishment of international centers providing nuclear fuel cycle services.

We stand for further strengthening of the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) and the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), including through universalization and fulfillment of their provisions at the national level, as well as the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW), and for the adoption of corresponding resolutions to support them.
In 2011 within the framework of the 7th BWC Review Conference we will analyze the functioning of the biological weapons non-proliferation regime and identify potential ways to strengthen it. The Russian Federation intends to make every effort to ensure that the Review Conference be successful and efficient.

We note the importance of the UN SC Resolution 1540 in the context of global non-proliferation efforts. We stand for the full implementation of its provisions by all countries while taking into account the comprehensive and long-term nature of the tasks set by it. In this regard, serious efforts should be made to determine the scope of a new resolution on the extension of mandate of the UN SC 1540 Committee (to expire in April 2011), as well as benchmarks for the further development of this process. The Russian side is prepared to do it.

We are satisfied with the outcome of the third Panel of Governmental Experts on missiles and the result achieved. We stand for continued discussion on this topic within the framework of the UN, based on the report prepared by the Panel.

We attach great importance to improving the effectiveness of the Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation, viewed as a necessary step towards a legally binding multilateral agreement on a global missile non-proliferation regime.

Lately, conventional arms issues are increasingly topping the agenda. We are of the view that an attempt to hasten the decision-making process on global arms trade regulations through adopting a weak or inoperative global instrument would only undermine the efforts by the international community to remedy the situation in this sphere. This is fully true for the concept of an international Arms Trade Treaty, which is currently under consideration.

The objective to improve effectiveness of the implementation of the UN Programme of Action to combat the illicit trade in SALW remains topical. We deem it advisable to work out, within the framework of the Programme of Action, specific measures to prevent the diversion of SALW from legal trade to illicit trafficking. Such measures could be based on the analysis of best practices reflected in annual
national reports on the implementation of the Programme of Action presented by States to the UN Secretariat.

The Russian Federation consistently stands against the creation of new areas of confrontation and military rivalry. The rapidly developing information space can become one of such areas. This year we will once again table a draft resolution on the Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security, based on the work of the Group of Governmental Experts on this issue. We call upon the States to support its consensus adoption and co-sponsor it.

The Russian delegation is open to a constructive and transparent cooperation, based on mutual respect, on the entire spectrum of the mentioned issues during the work of the First Committee with a view to achieving tangible results.

Let me assure you, distinguished Mr. Chairman, of our support for your efforts towards an effective organization of our forthcoming work.