STATEMENT BY
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AT THE FIRST COMMITTEE
OF THE 66TH SESSION OF THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

(Thematic debate on nuclear issues)

Distinguished Mr. Chairman,

During the general debate we have already had an opportunity to set forth Russian approaches to nuclear disarmament. Now we would like to dwell on the key aspects in a concise way.

The Russian Federation is satisfied with the way the new START Treaty which entered into force this February is being implemented. Active information exchange has been launched under this agreement and inspection activity is being conducted. Within a few days the Bilateral Consultative Commission established by the Treaty will start its second session in Geneva. We assess its work as being productive.

The full-scale implementation of the Treaty will not only strengthen the security of its Parties, but also international stability, as well as will help enhance the nuclear non-proliferation regime and expand the nuclear disarmament process. We are also of the view that successful implementation of this agreement is only possible in strict compliance with the principles of equality, parity, equal and indivisible security of the Parties contained therein.
We will present more details on this during Russia-US briefing on the START implementation to be held on the margins of the First Committee on October 20.

In the wake of the entry into force of the Treaty we have noticed growing expectations with regard to further steps in nuclear disarmament. We are open to a dialogue on this issue; we do believe, however, that it is essential now to gather practical experience of the new START implementation and assess objectively the quality and viability of this agreement. Such an analysis will help make plans on the substance of new steps toward a nuclear weapon-free world.

Another key issue that, in our view, requires a particular attention is a growing need to give the process of nuclear disarmament a multilateral dimension. Without moving forward on this a significant progress is hardly achievable.

We welcome the decisions by the 2010 NPT Review Conference. The Final Document of the Conference agreed upon on the basis of mutual compromises creates a basis for further development of multilateral approaches in the area of nuclear disarmament. The RevCon decisions are comprehensive and provide for a contribution by all states to their implementation.

This concerns also the relevant conditions for progressive reductions of nuclear weapons that can be achieved only with due account of all factors affecting the strategic stability. Since we spoke about these factors during the general debate, I will not repeat them now.

As a further development of 2010 NPT RevCon results some countries or groups of countries intend to table draft resolutions that emphasize certain aspects of the implementation of the Final Document. This work is important and we support it. It is no less important, however, to ensure integrity of the decisions taken and avoid their free or broad interpretation since this will actually reopen the achieved compromise and complicate the implementation of decisions.

In our view, one of the most acute topics today is missile defense. The problematic aspects in the dialogue on the issue have become apparent long ago. Still we do not see real progress in addressing them. We are concerned primarily with the need to maintain strategic stability under practically unlimited build-up of missile defense capabilities. So far we haven’t seen any readiness by NATO or the U.S. to
allow equal participation of Russia in the development of EuroMD concept and architecture, or to start to elaborate adequate confidence and transparency building measures as regards missile defense. Moreover, the apparent trend is now towards practical deployment of the elements of global US missile defense system that among other prospects – as our military experts believe – is able to weaken Russia’s defense potential.

We strongly believe that the existing problems should not be kept in silence; they need to be addressed consistently and constructively instead of covering them up by declaratory and in fact noncommittal statements about the “non-targeting” of missile defense.

Over the recent months no cardinal shifts have happened in addressing the key issues of Russia–US/NATO interaction on missile defense. If the events develop further in this direction a chance offered by the NRC Lisbon Summit to move the missile defense issue from confrontation to cooperation will be lost.

The establishment of nuclear weapon free zones is considered by Russia as an important instrument to increase the level of regional and international security and strengthen the nuclear weapon non-proliferation regime.

We fully support the idea of creating a WMD-free zone in the Middle East in accordance with the decisions of 1995 and 2010. We are convinced that its earliest establishment would ensure a comprehensive solution to the issues of non-proliferation and effective maintenance of peace and stability in this region.

Russia, together with other NPT depository States, is making significant efforts to create favorable conditions for convening a Conference in 2012. The success of the 2012 Conference will fully depend on the willingness of the Middle East states to engage in a constructive dialogue. The depositories on their part are ready to contribute to this process within their obligations and in accordance with the decisions of the Review Conference.

Russia reiterates its support to the NWFZ Treaty in Central Asia. It is essential for us that the NWFZ Treaty in CA and its Protocol are fully consistent with the established international norms and practice in this field. We have no questions regarding the content of the Treaty nor the text of its Protocol that contains security
assurances by nuclear powers to the States Parties to the Treaty. We fully support these documents. We believe that all nuclear countries should do so.

We also welcome the proclamation of the NWFZ in South East Asia. We have consistently voted in favour of UNGA resolutions on NWFZ in South East Asia. We hope that the consultations among the P-5 and ASEAN countries held in Geneva and quite recently here in New York will help remove the remaining questions and open the way to signing a relevant protocol on security assurances.

It is a priority for us to ensure the earliest entry into force of the CTBT. This Treaty is called to become one of essential elements of the international legal system of security and an important link among the mechanisms of non-proliferation and disarmament. We urgently call upon all the States, primarily those on whom its entry into force depends, to join the CTBT as soon as possible. Russia has cosponsored the relevant draft resolution of the First Committee.

At the current session of the First Committee one of the most acute issues to address are the prospects of launching negotiations at the Conference on Disarmament on the Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT). Russia has always called and continues to call for the earliest commencement of such negotiations. We strongly believe that it is the CD format that can ensure the participation in negotiations of all States possessing relevant capabilities. It should also be borne in mind that holding negotiations on the CD platform will not only help preserve this unique multilateral negotiating forum for disarmament but provide an opportunity to launch discussion of other relevant issues within a balanced program of work.

We call on all delegations, first of all, those on whom it may depend, to strive toward a compromise, including in the context of the First Committee draft resolutions on FMCT and the CD Report. This needs to be done without delay, since tomorrow it may be too late, and we risk facing a collapse of the entire multilateral disarmament mechanism.

Thank you, Mr.Chairman.