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Statement
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Problems of international security, non-proliferation and arms control, discussed by the First Committee of the General Assembly, have been traditionally of priority importance for our delegation.

Recent events in Syria have shown the importance of further strengthening of the global regime of non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The use of chemical weapons cannot be justified, and those responsible for this crime must be held accountable.

In this context, we welcome the agreement of 14 September, 2013 for the destruction of Syrian chemical weapons and the UN Security Council resolution 2118(2013) on Syria that addresses not only the elimination of Syrian chemical weapons but also puts in place a foundation for a peaceful settlement of the Syrian crisis. All of the above is a strong indication that there is no alternative to a political and diplomatic solution to the conflict, and there cannot be. Any military intervention will only increase escalation and threaten the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the state.

The NPT remains one of the fundamental elements of the international security and strategic stability system. We have less than two years before the next NPT Review Conference. I call upon all States parties to take every effort to implement the 2010 Review Conference Plan of Action. It is important that all components of the Treaty (disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful use of nuclear energy) are given due consideration.

Belarus is a consistent supporter and active participant in the process of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

This year marks 20 years since the accession of our country to the NPT as a non-nuclear-weapon state. In July 1993, Belarus became the first state, which voluntarily and without any
preconditions gave up the opportunity to possess nuclear weapons left after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The withdrawal of nuclear weapons from her territory was completed in November 1996.

Unfortunately, the process of complete renunciation of nuclear weapons and the creation of nuclear weapons free zones, which the international community had welcomed in the 1990s, has not been continued in the new millennium. Moreover, some states seek to develop their military nuclear programs, modernise nuclear weapons and their means of delivery. We are convinced that the renunciation of nuclear weapons does not weaken but strengthens the sovereignty, territorial integrity and expands opportunities for economic development. An example of Belarus, Kazakhstan and Ukraine should promote the formation of such conviction in other countries.

Today, Belarus together with Kazakhstan, Ukraine and Reaching Critical Will will organise a round table discussion on the theme ‘Twenty years of renunciation of nuclear weapons by Belarus, Kazakhstan and Ukraine: lessons learned and prospects of nuclear disarmament’. The purpose of the event is to draw once again attention to the historic importance of the political decisions adopted in the early 1990s that have stimulated the process of nuclear disarmament and substantially strengthen the overall international security. The process of entry into force of the CTBT, which is great example of a realistic approach to the process of nuclear disarmament, is frozen.

The non-proliferation of WMD and their means of delivery is closely related to issues of export control and prevention of falling of WMD materials in the hands of terrorists. In this regard, Belarus supports efforts to implement UNSC resolution 1540(2004) that provides for an integrated and comprehensive approach to fighting the spreading of WMD. National Framework document ("roadmap") for additional measures regarding the implementation of resolution 1540, prepared by Belarus last year, is an effective tool to increase the implementation of the resolution. We are ready for the widest possible cooperation, both in terms of the resolution itself, and our implementation of the framework document.

The WMD issues are consonant with the objectives of the international community to prevent the uncontrolled spread of conventional weapons.

The Arms Trade Treaty, which was adopted by the UN General Assembly, is a step in the right direction. However, unfortunately, it does not fully meet its primary task to prevent illicit trafficking in conventional arms. The effectiveness of this international instrument will depend on the participation of the largest arms exporters and importers as well as on concrete measures to prevent illicit trafficking in weapons and on a strong national export control systems in the countries where such systems are not available. Based on these factors, we will consider our options to join this international legal instrument.