STATEMENT
BY THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION
SERGEY A. RYABKOV
AT THE HIGH-LEVEL MEETING
ON NUCLEAR SAFETY AND SECURITY

New-York, 22 September 2011
Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished Delegates,

The Russian Federation views this meeting as an important linkage element of international efforts to strengthen nuclear safety in the aftermath of the NPP "Fukushima-1" accident 11 March this year. We expect this meeting to provide another significant political impetus for the expert work within the IAEA.

The Russian Federation attaches great importance to the nuclear safety issues. In Russia nuclear safety is ensured at the level of the highest international standards. This fact has been confirmed by numerous IAEA peer-review missions at Russian nuclear facilities to assess various aspects of their operational safety.

We always believed and continue to believe that nuclear energy must be developed with special priority given to nuclear safety. After the Fukushima accident we have conducted stress-tests of all operational nuclear power plants in Russia. They have been carried out with due account of all possible extreme hazards typical for the area where a particular power plant is located as well as of all possible combinations of these hazards. The results of the stress-tests show that Russian NPPs are resistant to any severe exposure. It means that the basic design principles of these power plants were correct.

The accident at the NPP in Japan put the issues of ensuring safe operation and development of nuclear energy again in the forefront of international agenda. It is necessary to learn lessons from this situation in order to prevent its repetition in the future. We believe that a thorough and professional analysis of the accident including its roots and the way it evolved should be conducted with the central role of IAEA as it is the only international organization that has necessary expertise and authority. However, it is obvious that there is a need for a more clear regulation of some issues that define the safety of NPPs. Among them are greater responsibilities of States and organizations which operate NPPs, efficiency and quality of information provided in the event of a nuclear accident, and issues related to building NPPs in seismically hazardous zones.
Addressing the leaders of several States and international organizations on 26 April this year, President of the Russian Federation Dmitry Medvedev stressed the need for strengthening international legal framework in the area of nuclear safety after the accident at the NPP in Japan. In June 2011 Russia introduced in accordance with the established procedure a number of proposals aimed at removing the existing gaps in the international legal instruments in this sphere. These proposals include additional provisions to the Convention on Nuclear Safety and Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident. Moreover, we have put forward the proposals regarding the improvement of the IAEA nuclear safety standards. We hope that they will be implemented with due account of positive replies that we have received from a number of capitals.

Mr. Chairman,

The 55th session of the IAEA GC is being held in Vienna these days with the participation of the world leading nuclear scientists. This conference is to endorse the IAEA action plan on nuclear safety which was approved by the Board of Governors of the Agency. This plan was developed according to the decision of the ministerial Conference on nuclear safety held in June this year under the auspices of the IAEA specially to take extraordinary measures in connection with the accident at the “Fukushima-1” NPP. This document takes into account the above-mentioned Russian proposals and gives the necessary direction for large-scale and targeted efforts to strengthen safety of nuclear energy facilities for the years to come. We believe that the implementation of this plan will significantly strengthen safety worldwide and make nuclear power a more attractive source to meet the growing energy demands of mankind.

The Fukushima accident should not impede the development of nuclear power. We believe that with a responsible attitude the peaceful use of nuclear energy can give our countries including the developing countries a reliable, efficient and environmentally clean source of energy while guaranteeing safety for people and environment.
Russia's plans for nuclear energy development remain unchanged. They include construction in the foreseeable future of a dozen of new nuclear power units based on Russian technology at home and abroad. The Bushehr NPP in Iran has just started its operation recently with assistance of the "Rosatom" State Atomic Energy corporation. This NPP is the first one to be launched after the Fukushima event. An active preparation is underway for power grid connection unit at the Kalininskaya NPP in Central Russia. We believe that there is no reasonable alternative to developing peaceful use of nuclear energy.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.