Statement by H. E. Mr. Alexander Slabý

Ambassador and Permanent Representative,
Head of the Delegation of the Czech Republic
to the 2nd Session of the Preparatory Committee
for the 2005 Review Conference
of the State Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

at the General Debate

Geneva, April 29, 2003

My delegation wishes to extend its congratulations to you on your election to preside over the 2nd session of the 2005 NPT Review Conference PrepCom and assures you of its full support and co-operation.

The Czech Republic, having aligned itself with the statement of the European Union, would like to make some comments on involved issues.

The first PrepCom, held in New York last year, ended quite smoothly but not as resolvedly as we had expected before, and the year since the 1st session brought some additional concerns of us. That is why the 2nd PrepCom should demonstrate the State Parties' strong adherence to the fact that the NPT and non-proliferation regime remains robust and effective. Present discussion seems to show our concentrating on seeking balance between reinforcing the credibility of the review process and such issues of compliance and nuclear disarmament.

The Czech Republic strongly supports full and effective implementation of the NPT as a tool of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. The 2005 Review Conference will have to address important challenges to the Treaty such as the issue of...
universality, reinforcement of its efficiency to prevent or disclose possible non-compliance, measures to prevent terrorists from acquiring nuclear weapons, to mention at least some which we consider most important.

The NPT is one of the legal pillars of international security. It, however, should not stand alone, as other international instruments should complement the legal security framework in the nuclear area. First, we emphasize the importance of the CTBT entry into force. We also call for an early commencement of negotiations on the Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty that would ban the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons. At this juncture, I cannot but express our regret that both the entry into force of the CTBT and the start of FMCT negotiations are still far from reality.

The global non-proliferation efforts are supported by the two control regimes – the ZC and the NSG – in which many countries around take part. The Czech Republic, currently at the chair of the NSG, does its best to increase the contribution of the Group to global non-proliferation regime, including in terms of transparency of the NSG’s work vis-à-vis partners outside of it. Indeed, like-mindedness, voluntary adherence and transparency are the principles, which guide us in the NSG’s efforts in support of the NPT. We are pleased to see partners outside of the NSG to adopt and implement the Group’s export control provisions thus enhancing the efficiency of global non-proliferation regime.

As concerns countries on the territory of which nuclear material is stored, manipulated with or transported, we call upon them to implement strict provisions regarding accounting for and control of the material and to secure their physical protection on the level of the international standards. The Czech Republic fully supports the IAEA in its efforts to enhance co-operation in implementing the Programme for Preventing and Combating Illicit Trafficking in Nuclear Material and plays an active role in this Programme. It can be illustrated by ordinary organising the international training course on physical protection of nuclear material and nuclear installations the last of which was held in our country at the beginning of this year. Last year we also implemented several new provisions aimed on protection against possible acts of nuclear terrorism. We consider this problem as a very serious international issue and therefore we have made voluntary financial commitment to the IAEA’s fund devoted to such matter.