Mr. Chairman,

Developing assurances against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons and providing non-nuclear-weapon States Parties to the NPT with such assurances is a fundamental objective of all Parties to the Treaty.

Russia has consistently supported non-nuclear-weapon States Parties to the NPT seeking to obtain such assurances. We believe that the achievement of this objective will promote universalization of the Treaty and strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation regime while enhancing confidence and predictability in relations among the states.

In 1995 Russia along with other nuclear powers co-sponsored a UN Security Council resolution, which provided positive security assurances, as well as took note of national statements of the nuclear states on negative assurances.

The negative assurances of the nuclear states have already acquired a legally binding nature pursuant to respective protocols to the nuclear-weapon free zone treaties (NWFZ). Russia signed such protocols to the Treaties of Tlatelolco, Rarotonga and Pelindaba. Legally binding security assurances of the Russian Federation cover more than 100 states. This number will grow as new nuclear-free zones are being established. We are willing to contribute to these processes.

Encouraging the efforts to create nuclear-weapon free zones, Russia views them as part of the task of strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation regime and building
regional security. We welcome the work undertaken by the Central Asia states to establish NWFZ in their region. We support the so-called Samarkand draft treaty on a nuclear-weapon free zone in the Central Asia agreed upon by these states. Russia is prepared to address the remaining issues in regard to the Southeast Asia NWFZ Treaty within the framework of a dialogue between the nuclear powers and the ASEAN states. A holdback in the efforts to establish a NWFZ in the Middle East is certainly cause for concern, especially given the fact that the military and political situation in the region continues to be complicated. We think that establishment of a nuclear-free zone in the South Asia remains relevant, as it would strengthen regional stability and security.

Mr. Chairman,

Russia advocates elaboration of a global negative assurances agreement at the Conference on Disarmament, provided it contains reservations concerning cases in which nuclear weapons may be used. We are in favor of beginning the realization of the decision adopted as far back as in 1998 at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva to reestablish the Ad Hoc Committee on Negative Security Assurances with a negotiating mandate. We consider the Conference on Disarmament to be the most acceptable place for such work since it is a unique multilateral disarmament forum. Moreover, this would be consistent with the provisions of the Final Document of the 2000 NPT Review Conference.

Development of negative security assurances for the non-nuclear-weapon States Parties to the NPT is an essential instrument of strengthening security and stability in the world. Russia will continue its active work to achieve success in this area.

Thank you for your attention.