STATEMENT

by the Russian Delegation at the First Session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons on Article IV of the NPT

Vienna, may 2007
Dear Mr. Chairman,

We believe that the nearest future holds no alternative but to further develop and advance nuclear energy.

According to current expert estimates, oil and natural gas reserves of our planet could be virtually exhausted in this century. Moreover, the countries that joined the Kyoto Protocol, Russia being among them, are facing the task of reducing the so-called “greenhouse” gas emissions into the atmosphere. Finding a comprehensive solution to this problem seems unlikely without a large-scale nuclear energy development.

Russia consistently advocates further promoting and expanding the range of nuclear technology applications as well as increasing the number of countries enjoying the benefits of nuclear energy.

In this context, we emphasize the growing importance of the Article IV of the NPT which sets out the inalienable right of the non-nuclear-weapon States Parties to the Treaty "to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination". Given the rising role and importance of the nuclear energy in the world, increasing number of countries and experts will find themselves involved in the sphere of high and state-of-the-art technology and use of world energy on a practical scale, both with the help of existing and new technologies.

We put special emphasis on the role and importance of the IAEA, a competent and responsible organization that provides for global multilateral cooperation in the field of peaceful use of nuclear energy. Bearing this in mind, we deem it essential to pursue further strengthening of the Agency's prestige.

We believe that any assistance to the developing countries and regions in terms of mastering nuclear technologies in the energy sector, agriculture, industry and medicine has to be rendered in accordance with the IAEA Statute and in strict compliance with the nuclear non-proliferation regime.

Our country has a history of providing such assistance to the NPT State Parties and is willing to provide it in the future, including with a view to constructing and operating nuclear power plants, supplying nuclear fuel, nuclear equipment and material, constructing test nuclear facilities, training nuclear specialists, ensuring nuclear safety and handling radioactive waste. We are actively participating in the IAEA programmes aimed at developing nuclear energy.

In the past five years alone, Russia concluded and renewed agreements of cooperation in the field of peaceful use of nuclear energy with 6 countries. Among them Chile, Great Britain, Peru, South Africa and Vietnam. Russia is constructing
nuclear reactors in China, India, and Iran and has signed a contract to construct a NPP in Bulgaria.

We are guided by the notion that sustainable development of nuclear energy throughout the world requires an arrangement of conditions that would preclude any use of peaceful atoms for non-peaceful purposes.

Thus, one of the focuses of such work is a multilateral approach to nuclear fuel cycles (NFC). Multilateral approach could play a crucial role in ensuring rights of States to peaceful use of nuclear energy. Such nuclear technology as uranium enrichment or nuclear fuel processing is not only sensitive in terms of nuclear weapon proliferation but also highly expensive to create and implement, especially where states with limited scale nuclear programmes are concerned. In this connection we appreciate efforts pursued by the IAEA in the sphere of multilateral approaches to NFC.

In January 2006, President Vladimir Putin came out with an initiative to create a prototype global nuclear energy infrastructure that would comprise international centers offering nuclear fuel cycle services. As a first step towards implementing this initiative, Russia is establishing in its territory an international uranium enrichment center (IUEC) that would be placed under the IAEA safeguards. The Russian government passed a decision to put the Angarsk Enrichment Plant serving as a basis for the IUEC on the list of enterprises where the IAEA safeguards are applied. Presumably, an emergency nuclear fuel reserve would be created to ensure guaranteed supplies.

The center would be open for all States complying with their NPT obligations. Upon joining it, the States will be able to take part in managing the center but will not gain access to technology. The center's major objective lies in creating infrastructure which provides for guaranteed supplies of low-enriched uranium to the countries that use nuclear energy, without building national uranium enrichment capacity. For this purpose, the conditions of joining the IUEC will not go beyond the scope of relevant NPT obligations.

Kazakhstan has become our first partner in creating the IUEC. The Russian-Kazakh agreement on establishment of the IUEC is being prepared.

Russia is taking part in other initiatives related to multilateral approach to NFC. At the same time, the way we see it is that participation in any such initiatives should be strictly voluntary for all States. These initiatives should not have a negative impact on the existing market of NFC services.
In this connection, I would like to recall that back at the Millenium Summit the Russian President proposed an initiative aimed at creating cost-efficient environmentally safe nuclear reactors and nuclear fuel cycles that would not pose a threat to the non-proliferation regime. Today, the IAEA Project on Innovative Nuclear Reactors and Fuel Cycles (INPRO) has brought together both the majority of States in the vanguard of nuclear technology and those running small-scale nuclear programmes or only entertaining plans to develop nuclear energy. The project has a total of 28 participating states. At the present time Russia provides most financing of the INPRO as well as contributes to the project by delegating its experts to take part in it.

We also share the goals and objectives set out within the Generation IV International Forum to create advanced nuclear reactors. Russia currently holds an observer status at the Forum while intending to become its full-fledged participant later this year.

It is also worth the importance of signing on November 21, 2006, in Paris of the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER) Agreement which incorporates such participants, as Russia, China, European Union, India, Japan, Republic of Korea, and the US. Thermonuclear energy will help solve the problem of sustainable energy supply in the longer term.

Mr. Chairman,

Nowadays the developing countries show a growing interest in nuclear energy. At the same time, nuclear technology and reactors designed for large developed countries sometimes fail to answer purposes of the developing countries due to insufficient power grid level and limited energy demand. Russia is constructing an offshore NPP of low capacity (70 MW) that could be used for power energy and freshwater supplies in these very countries. Series-produced offshore reactors would run on low-enriched fuel. This type of reactors proved to be highly reliable and efficient when run on the Russian ships. Before putting it up for export, Russia will try out the first offshore NPP.

Growth of nuclear power capacities makes us give a serious thought to sufficiency of fuel reserve for the nuclear energy sector. According to various estimates, currently explored reserves of natural uranium might last for another 70 to 100 years.

As the service life of the currently built nuclear reactors will amount to 50-60 years, it is high time to contemplate the need of developing fast breeder reactors that would allow to amplify the nuclear energy fuel reserve tenfolds. Furthermore, fast neutron reactors would allow to significantly reduce spent nuclear fuel (SNF) volumes and ensuing growing surplus of plutonium separated out of SNF. For years-
now, Russia has been successfully operating one such breeder reactor – BN-600 while another reactor – BN-800 – should come into operation in 2012.

Development of nuclear energy is to a great extent linked with the problem of handling radioactive waste and spent nuclear fuel. Today, Russia attaches special importance to this problem.


In April 2007, it adopted the Federal target programme on Ensuring Nuclear and Radiation Safety throughout 2008 and up to 2015 which expressly lays out objectives and tasks facing Russian nuclear sector in this regard. Choice of ways of handling SNF and RW is subject to requirements governing reliable nuclear and radiation security, safety of nuclear material in terms of prevention of their falling into hands of malefactors.

The Russian Federation places great emphasis on the technical assistance and cooperation programme pursued by the IAEA. For many years now, our country has been actively working with the IAEA to run various projects aimed at effective implementation of applied nuclear technology in areas of importance for developing economies of the IAEA States Members.

Mr. Chairman,

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons is a key element, a guarantee in its own right of the continually expanding international cooperation in the field of peaceful nuclear energy use. Its unique structure is tailored for decades ahead and is perfect for addressing major long-term tasks facing the mankind. Russia is ready to continue further cooperation with the States Parties to the Treaty in handling these tasks with the help of atoms for peace.