STATEMENT

by the Delegation of the Russian Federation
at the First Session of the Preparatory Committee
for the 2010 NPT Review Conference
on Article III of the Treaty

Vienna, may 2007
Mr. Chairman,

The IAEA safeguards system established pursuant to the NPT plays a most important role in ensuring the viability of the non-proliferation regime. The IAEA safeguards supported by technological measures are not only a control mechanism of non-proliferation which assures that all States Parties comply with the NPT but also a considerable confidence-building measure.

With a view to efficient implementation of the provisions of Article III of the NPT, Russia consistently upholds the IAEA safeguards and stands for universalizing the Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement.

However, it is important to make sure this system does not remain static. All states should look for ways of ensuring that the safeguards system stacks up to new challenges posed to nuclear non-proliferation. First efforts to improve the safeguards system were made by way of establishing such mechanism as the Additional Protocol according to which the states granted the IAEA broader rights to access nuclear facilities and information. Nowadays it helps ensure non-diversion of nuclear materials for military purposes as well as absence of any undeclared nuclear materials and activities.

We advocate universalization of the Additional Protocol as an instrument that enhances the efficiency of the IAEA safeguards system. It is essential to put forth active efforts towards making the Safeguards Agreement with the IAEA and its Additional Protocol a universally recognized verification standard in the field of nuclear non-proliferation. The Russian Federation has offered and will continue to offer assistance to strengthen the IAEA safeguards system through financing the national programme of scientific and technical support for these safeguards.

In this context we would like to draw attention to the work of the Advisory Committee on Safeguards and Verification established in June 2005 as it could not come up with recommendations to the Board of Governors. The issue of extending the Safeguards Committee’s mandate will be considered in June this year. In the present situation, it would be wise for the Committee to focus on providing technical recommendations. At the same time, we call upon all States not to regard work carried out by the Committee as an attempt to impose additional financial or legal obligations on them or to infringe upon their rights. The matter in question is elaboration of a plan of action aimed at enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of the safeguards system. It is our common task.

Mr. Chairman,

Implementation of the IAEA safeguards under the Article III of the Treaty is a prerequisite for cooperation in the field of peaceful use of nuclear energy.
Today there is a real danger that under the pretext of developing nuclear energy one might create capabilities that, if necessary, may be easily used for military purposes. At the present stage Russia is willing to consider the Additional Protocol a condition for transfer of sensitive nuclear technologies and equipment. We make every effort to make the Additional Protocol a significant new standard in the field of nuclear supplies arrangements.

We share the opinion of the IAEA General Director Dr. ElBaradei stating that nowadays there is no reason to construct new enrichment facilities since the world has enough operational capacities to provide fuel for all existing nuclear power plants and research reactors as it is. We believe that today it is important to continue working towards establishing a system of guaranteed nuclear fuel supplies and elaborate long-term options of handling nuclear technology, particularly at regional centers on the basis of a multilateral approach.

Such an approach has a significant non-proliferation dimension: locally sensitive nuclear fuel cycle operations in international centers placed under international supervision allows for a more effective control over the handling of nuclear material, while precluding its possible use for undeclared purposes. This option does not affect the prospects of applying nuclear technologies for peaceful use. We regard the Russian initiative on establishing international centers offering nuclear fuel cycle services as a possible way of addressing this problem. Our delegation will dwell on this issue in more detail in its statement on Article IV of the NPT.

Mr. Chairman,

Export control was designed to be one of the most important instruments to combat illicit trafficking in nuclear material. Enhancing its efficiency, strengthening relevant regimes, increasing their transparency, as well as involving countries that possess relevant technology in the export control regimes range among measures that would prevent unauthorized transfers of controlled items and technology.

Russia is constantly improving its national legislation on export control. Our country supports, and participates in, the activities of the Nuclear Suppliers Group and the Zangger Committee. We believe that they have managed to prove it possible to establish a concerted procedure for the transfer of controlled products without infringing upon the legitimate rights to carry out international cooperation in the peaceful use of nuclear energy. We consider it necessary to further strengthen these mechanisms.

In this context we would like to underscore the significance of Article III, para 2 of the NPT. It could only be implemented subject to efficient accounting and control of nuclear material at the national level as well as to export control procedures.
Therefore, it is highly important for all countries to implement the provisions of the UNSCR 1540 adopted upon the initiative of Russia and aimed at preventing WMD, related materials, technologies and means of delivery from falling into the hands of non-State actors, above all terrorists.

Given the growing terrorist threat and the fact that activities of terrorist groups are acquiring multinational nature, the responsibility of States for taking steps to prevent acts of nuclear terrorism is gaining great importance. The adoption of the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism became a significant step towards countering this threat. We call on the States that have not yet ratified this Convention to do so as soon as possible.

The American-Russian Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism launched during the G8 Summit in Saint Petersburg to mobilize States to implement the obligation they assumed under the already mentioned International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism as well as the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material, UNSCR 1540 and other international legal instruments aims to contribute to solution of this problem. This initiative is open for accession by any State that shares its common goals and is strongly committed to combating nuclear terrorism. We call upon all States to join in the work within the framework of this Initiative.

It is worthy to note the important role of the IAEA and the Agency’s Nuclear Security Plan in the context of countering the nuclear terrorism threat.

Mr. Chairman,

We render full support to the IAEA program aimed at decreasing the level of enrichment of nuclear fuel for research reactors in the third countries to less than 20 per cent. We believe that its implementation will allow to considerably reduce the risk of HEU proliferation.

The Russian-American agreement on cooperation in the field of withdrawing to Russia the fuel for research reactors manufactured in Russia has been in force since 2004. Fresh nuclear fuel has already been withdrawn from Serbia, Romania, Bulgaria, Libya, Uzbekistan, the Czech Republic, and Germany, while spent fuel is withdrawn from Uzbekistan. Work is underway to remove spent fuel from Latvia.

We appreciate the IAEA’s active contribution towards implementing the programme to remove research reactor fuel to Russia, particularly in terms of recovery and evaluating of condition of HEU kept at the research reactor sites.
Mr. Chairman,

It is only through a comprehensive and systemic approach to the fulfillment by the NPT States Parties of their obligations under Article III of the Treaty that we will be able to gain confidence in the peaceful nature of national nuclear programmes, adequately respond to new threats and challenges, and prevent non-declared nuclear activities.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.