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STATEMENT
by the Delegation of the Russian Federation
at the Third Session of the Preparatory Committee
for the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties
to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
on cluster I issues (nuclear disarmament)

Practical Steps of the Russian Federation
in the Field of Nuclear Disarmament

New York, 4–15 May 2009
Mr. Chairman,

Russia shares commitment to the noble goal of freeing the humanity from nuclear threat. In his address to the Conference of Disarmament in Geneva voiced by Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov on 7 March 2009, President Dmitry Medvedev of the Russian Federation made a special emphasis on the fact that our country is fully committed to building a world free from these most deadly weapons.

The Russian Federation is fully aware of its special responsibility as a nuclear-weapon state and a permanent member of the UN Security Council for the fulfillment of its disarmament obligations under Article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

Our foreign policy is based on a more reserved military policy. We believe that today all the necessary conditions have been created for the progress in negotiations on radical nuclear missile reductions.

As a result of the implementation of the 1987 US-Soviet Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles (the INF Treaty), 1846 ground-based ballistic and cruise missiles with a range of 500-5500 kilometers and 825 associated launchers were completely destroyed. A total of over 3 thousand nuclear warheads have been deactivated, with a total yield of over 500 thousand kilotons. Russia proposes to render the obligations under the INF Treaty universal and elaborate a legally binding arrangement on the elimination of all weapons of this type. We believe that supporting such initiative will give a new impetus to ensuring global and regional stability. We are prepared to constructive dialogue and substantive discussion of this initiative which has already won many supporters.

Prompt elimination of intermediate and shorter-range missiles and successful implementation of the Treaty have laid the groundwork for deeper and larger-scale nuclear arms reductions in strategic nuclear forces too. The Treaty on the Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (the START Treaty) which entered into force on 5 December 1994 clearly manifested the commitment to nuclear arsenals reduction. The role of this Treaty in ensuring international peace and stability can hardly be underestimated. It was truly historic for ensuring strategic stability and security, and reducing arsenals of strategic offensive arms. Its implementation has made the world safer. In accordance with the Treaty, by the target date of 5 December 2001 the actual aggregate number of deployed strategic delivery vehicles was cut down to 1136 and the number of weapons attributed to them to 5518.
The Russian Federation has completely fulfilled its obligations under the START Treaty and has been further eliminating its strategic offensive arms. By 1 January 2009, we destroyed over 1500 launchers of inter-continental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) and submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs), over 3000 ICBMs and SLBMs, as well as 46 strategic nuclear submarines and 66 heavy bombers. As of that date Russia possessed no more than 900 deployed strategic offensive delivery vehicles and 4000 warheads accountable under the START Treaty.

The Treaty on Strategic Offensive Reductions (the Moscow Treaty) signed in Moscow in May 2002 ensures continuity of the disarmament and arms control process. Under this Treaty, by 31 December 2012, Russia and the United States must reduce their strategic nuclear warheads to the level of 1700-2200, that is approximately threefold against the threshold level envisaged by the START Treaty.

We have every intention of progressing further in agreed, verifiable and irreversible reductions of nuclear weapons. In pursuance of this approach Russia and the United States have engaged in active work to conclude a new arrangement on the reduction of strategic offensive arms. On 1 April 2009 in London the Presidents of Russia and the US agreed to start negotiations to develop a new comprehensive legally-binding arrangement on the strategic offensive arms reduction and limitation. An understanding was reached that the parties would seek to record levels of reductions that will be lower than those in the Moscow Treaty which is currently in effect.

In addition to strategic offensive arms limitation, I would also like to stress Russia’s efforts to reduce non-strategic nuclear arms. As a result of joint US-Russian initiatives Russia’s tactical nuclear arms arsenal has been reduced by three quarters.

The history and international community are yet to assess the role which the Russian Federation has played in the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons by withdrawing tactical nuclear weapons from the countries of the Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union to its territory.

Now, several years after, one can realize the immensity of this work, its speed and the absence of accidents. One should also take in consideration that the international situation was rather complex at that time, influencing this process day by day.

You know the result of this work. All tactical nuclear weapons without loss have been concentrated in the national territory of the Russian Federation. In this context we would like once again to draw the attention to Russia’s proposal to
ensure that all nuclear weapons be placed within the territories of the nuclear-
weapon states which possess them.

In the field of nuclear disarmament a large-scale international campaign for
the world free from nuclear weapons has begun recently; it enjoys the support by
political and public figures from many countries. The Russian Federation is
prepared to make a constructive contribution to the discussion of the proposed
measures. At the same time, advance towards “global zero” is only possible in
conditions of strengthened strategic stability and unstinting adherence to the
principle of equal security for all.

In his statement at the Helsinki University, President Dmitry A. Medvedev
of the Russian Federation clearly defined the conditions enabling nuclear
disarmament.

First. We must prevent the militarization of outer space. Despite all the
references made to this topic, it remains a very important and complicated one.
Second. It is unacceptable to compensate nuclear reductions by developing
strategic systems which are equipped with conventional weapons. This would be
an unequal exchange. And third. We must ensure the impossibility of creating so-
called recoverable nuclear capabilities.

Nuclear disarmament is impossible unless the processes in the field of
strategic offensive arms are taken in consideration. To our mind, unilateral plans to
establish global missile defense in the context of the implementation of the concept
of prompt global nuclear or non-nuclear strike prejudice strategic stability.

In the spirit of openness we propose a constructive alternative to unilateral
plans in this most important sphere, that is to unite the efforts of all states
interested in countering possible missile threats. Our “package” proposal to
develop cooperation remains in force. We will further develop and elaborate it. We
stand ready to joint work based on equal partnership.

Preventing militarization of outer space is a disarmament issue of special
importance. The Russian Federation has consistently opposed placing any types of
weapons in outer space. Over a year ago, Russia and China tabled draft
international Treaty on Prevention of the Placement of Weapons in Outer Space
(PPWT), believing that preventing arms race in the outer space would also
contribute to ensuring predictability of the strategic situation. All states benefiting
from peaceful space programmes should be interested in this.

The mentioned facts and the practical steps taken by the Russian Federation
to fulfill its obligations demonstrate its determination to really address the issue of
nuclear weapons reductions.
We are convinced that both countries possessing nuclear weapons and all parties to the NPT without exception should play a role in freeing the world from nuclear threat. We expect that the 2010 NPT Review Conference will become a venue of a sincere discussion of an additional contribution to this process by other nuclear-weapon states parties to the NPT. It is our common goal to make the world safer, and it is only through joint efforts that we can attain success.