STATEMENT

by the Delegation of the Russian Federation

at the first session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference

Cluster 1 (nuclear disarmament)

Vienna, May 2012
Dear Mr. Chairman,

Russia has repeatedly stated its commitment to a noble goal, such as a world without nuclear weapons. We regard the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons as one of the major instruments for achieving that goal. For over 40 years of its existence this international legal document proved to be of unique value and indispensable for moving ahead with nuclear disarmament, promoting nuclear non-proliferation and free access of States to "peaceful atom".

It was the NPT with obligations enshrined in its Article VI that became a major driver of progress achieved over the last decades in the area of limitation and reduction of nuclear weapons. Allow me to remind you of the most prominent achievements made.

The first step towards real nuclear disarmament was the conclusion of the American-Soviet Treaty on the Elimination of the Intermediate-range and Shorter-range Missiles (hereinafter – the INF Treaty) signed on 8 December 1987. The INF Treaty made it possible to eliminate the whole class of nuclear-missile weapons. Pursuant to its provisions 1,846 ground-launched intermediate-range (1,000-5,500 km) and shorter-range (500-1,000 km) ballistic and cruise missiles and 825 launchers of such missiles were completely eliminated. In the aggregate, over 3,000 nuclear re-entry vehicles of total capacity of over 500,000 kt have been deactivated. The Treaty is still in force today. It remains an important factor of maintaining international security and strategic stability.

As a follow-up to the INF Treaty Russia proposed to develop a universal legally binding arrangement on complete elimination of such weapons. We believe that the implementation of such an initiative would give a new impetus to ensuring global and regional stability. We are ready for further detailed dialogue on this issue with all the interested parties.

The signing, on 31 July 1991, and entry into force, on 5 December 1994, of the Treaty on the Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms
(hereinafter – START) opened a new page of coordinated and verifiable reductions of strategic offensive arms of the US and Russia.

According to START the Russian Federation was obliged to reduce the number of strategic nuclear delivery vehicles to 1,600 units and the number of accountable warheads to the limit of 6,000 units. These obligations have been met fully and before the deadlines. As of the check date of 5 December 2001, the aggregate number of deployed strategic arms (inter-continental ballistic missiles, submarine-launched ballistic missiles and heavy bombers) was reduced to 1,136 units and the number of accountable warheads – to 5,518 units.

Not only the US and Russia, but also Belarus, Kazakhstan and Ukraine were the parties to START. The historic role of the Treaty would have been incomplete if Minsk, Astana and Kiev had not made significant efforts for its implementation or had not fully fulfilled their obligations under the 1992 Lisbon Protocol. A responsible choice of Belarus, Kazakhstan and Ukraine to remove stage-by-stage nuclear weapons from their territories and to accede to the NPT as non-nuclear States has strengthened their security and had a positive impact on strategic stability in general. On 4 December 2009, in their joint statement the Presidents of the US and Russia confirmed the security assurances for Belarus, Kazakhstan and Ukraine provided for in the Budapest Memorandums of 5 December 1994.

The Moscow Treaty on the Strategic Offensive Reductions concluded by the US and Russia in 2002 became another contribution of our country to nuclear disarmament. In accordance with its provisions, by 31 December 2012 the US and Russia undertook to reduce the limits of their strategic nuclear warheads to 1,700-2,200 units, i.e. approximately to one third of the aggregate limit provided for in START. These obligations have been fulfilled.

Along with strategic nuclear weapons the Russian Federation has significantly, by several hundred percent, reduced the number of its non-strategic nuclear weapons. Now the non-strategic nuclear potential of Russia does not exceed 25% of the amount possessed by the USSR in 1991. At the same time, all
Russia's non-strategic nuclear weapons are no longer deployed. They are located exclusively within the national territory and mostly in centralized storage facilities with highest security regime.

We have repeatedly called on the other countries possessing non-strategic weapons to follow the example of the Russian Federation and take them to their territories, eliminate all pieces of infrastructure created abroad for rapid deployment of such weapons and cease training with participation of non-nuclear States. We are convinced that such steps would be helpful in strengthening international security and stability. They would also be helpful in cleaning up the ways to further reduction and limitation of nuclear arsenals.

Signature, on 8 April 2010 in Prague, of the Treaty between the United States of America and the Russian Federation on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms was a very important event in the field of nuclear disarmament. The Treaty replaced both the START which had expired on 4 December 2009 and the 2002 Moscow Treaty on Strategic Offensive Reductions. According to the new Treaty, each Party shall reduce and limit its SOA, so that seven years after the entry into force of the Treaty and thereafter, their aggregate numbers, do not exceed:

(a) 700, for deployed inter-continental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs), and heavy bombers;
(b) 1,550, for warheads thereof;
(c) 800, for deployed and non-deployed ICBM and SLBM launchers, as well as heavy bombers.

Thus, the US and Russia clearly demonstrated once again their aspiration to achieve large-scale reductions of SOA. The parties agreed to cut their aggregate number of warheads (the "ceiling" under SORT – 2,200 warheads) by two thirds and reduce the aggregate number of strategic delivery vehicles (the "ceiling" under SORT – 1,600 delivery vehicles; no limit for delivery vehicles under the SORT) by more than a half.
At present, the US and Russia are working according to a plan on implementation of the Treaty. We believe that the experience gained with the SORT will be useful in determining conditions, contents and rates of further reductions and limitations of strategic offensive arms.

It is becoming more and more obvious that the efforts of two, let them be leading, nuclear powers are already not enough to move forward towards nuclear disarmament. At the same time, the comprehensive and complete elimination of nuclear weapons will be problematic if the process is limited to the P5 States.

Russia is ready to continue to move forward towards verifiable and irreversible reductions of nuclear weapons in accordance with obligations under Art. VI of the Treaty on Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). At the same time we are confident that such measures should be taken stage by stage in order to achieve the ultimate goal that is overall and complete disarmament. This goal can be achieved only by using a comprehensive approach while preserving strategic stability, complying with the principle of equal and indivisible security for all and ensuring, inter alia, the following international conditions:

- continued nuclear disarmament of all States with nuclear capabilities, their gradual involvement in the efforts made in this area already by the US and Russia;
- prevention of placement of weapons in outer space;
- provision of guarantees of the absence of recoverable nuclear capabilities in the States;
- inadmissibility of building-up conventional SOA (establishment of the so-called "compensatory potential");
- refusal form unilateral development of strategic missile defense systems is fraught with erosion of strategic stability and improper functioning of the regime of checks and balances that ensure global parity;
- elimination of quantity and quality imbalances in conventional weapons alongside with the resolution of other international problems, including settlement of regional conflicts;
- entry into force of the Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty;
- reliable viability of key multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation tools.

Lately, a wide-range campaign for full rejection of nuclear weapons is taking place throughout the world. More and more nuclear disarmament initiatives are put forward. They contain a lot of elements that are consistent with the Russian approaches. We pay due attention to such initiatives and maintain a constructive dialogue on this matter with all the interested parties.

Mr. Chairman,

Russia is fully aware of its special responsibility for the fulfillment of obligations under Article VI of NPT. Our country will continue to exert every effort to solve the historic task of building a stable and secure world in which there would be no nuclear weapons.