STATEMENT
by
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Head of the Delegation of the Russian Federation
at the first session of the Preparatory Committee
for the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty
on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)
on the Implementation of the Resolution on the Middle East
adopted at 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference

Vienna, 8 May 2012
Distinguished Mr. Chairman,

Calling of the Conference on establishing the zone free of nuclear and all other weapons of mass destruction as well as its delivery means in the Middle East is one of our foreign policy priorities. We are determined to spare no efforts in order that this most important international event takes place exactly within the determined timeframe, i.e. in 2012, and yields the most possible success, initiating a sustainable and comprehensive work towards establishment of the mentioned zone.

Together with the other States-NPT depositaries and co-authors of the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East, the US and the UK, we are working on the realization of the respective decisions of the 2010 NPT Review Conference. Intermediate results of these efforts, as well as our vision of a number of tasks for the nearest months, are reflected in our Joint Statement which was voiced earlier by the distinguished representative of the UK.

In addition to this, in our national status, we would like to note the following.

Since 1995, when the Resolution on the Middle East was adopted consensually by the NPT Review and Extension Conference, the topic of establishing a zone free of nuclear and all other weapons of mass destruction as well as its delivery means (MWDFZ), is well set within the agenda of the NPT Review process among its central items for discussion.

Russia shares the outstanding serious concerns of the Middle East States with the situation in the field of non-proliferation in the region. We take this situation as a very touching problem for us, and we call upon all States concerned to unite for its solution. Only together, by collective and joint efforts, and with the participation, first of all, of the very States of the region can we resolve all the complicated tasks related to strengthening the WMD-non-proliferation regimes in the Middle East that we are facing.

At the 2010 NPT Review Conference the most important decisions for launching the process were found and consensually adopted, as well as the main
«founding» tasks were set. We highly estimate the agreement reached by consensus, and are committed to its full realization. The respective mandate, approved by the Conference, is absolutely valid, and must be entirely implemented.

In October 2011, the UN Secretary-General, together with the three States-co-authors of the 1995 resolution, and in consultations with the States of the Middle East, as it was envisaged by the decision of the 2010 NPT Review Conference, the host country of the Conference – Finland – was designated. Simultaneously, the facilitator of the process of preparing and holding of the WMDFZ Conference – the Finnish Under-Secretary of State Jaakko Laajava – was appointed.

Taking this opportunity, we reaffirm our support for the facilitator, noting with satisfaction his skilled and energized implementation of the far not simple tasks he has been entrusted with. We hope that the Middle Eastern States, as well as we do, will render to Mr. Laajava all the necessary assistance, actively putting forward specific ideas regarding all necessary details and modalities of the forthcoming event.

The steps undertaken by us, and the continued work by the facilitator, with our active support, aimed at preparing for holding the Conference, demonstrate that there is a positive dynamics in this direction. In order that this dynamics does not sputter out but will develops, a strong political will is needed as well as energetic efforts of the very Middle East States, in the first place, which must be engaged directly in the preparatory process. Their intellectual input and practical contribution will be of an inestimable importance.

We think it necessary to focus presently on elaborating of the fundamental organizational modalities of holding the Conference, its agenda, range of participants, financing, etc. Some preliminary outlines in this regard were presented today by the facilitator. The work on these issues must be continued with a view to be accomplished as soon as possible, and taking into account the view of the States of the region. Simultaneously it is high time to start drafting the outcome documents of the Conference.
The focus of our further efforts must be turned to securing the unconditional and full-fledged participation in the Conference of all the Middle Eastern States without exception. Each of them should make its inestimable contribution to the creation of the regional non-proliferation regime. We turn to all the Middle East States, including those not present in this meeting, to confirm without delay its principal agreement to take part in the forthcoming Conference in the determined timeframe.

It is also necessary to set as soon as possible the specific dates of the Conference in 2012. The frequently mentioned in this context month of December seems to us to be quite acceptable term. We consider it utterly erratic and counterproductive to raise the idea that it is worth to postpone the Conference until the total stabilization of the situation in the Middle East and creation of the «necessary political conditions» first. We are convinced that the planned dialogue, provided the presence of corresponding political will, can, in itself become the most important confidence-building measure, and form the new, more favorable political climate in the Middle East, contributing to searching ways for reconciliation.

It occurs to be extremely useful that a group of a so-called «facilitator's friends» is created already now in the region for organizational and substantive support of preparing of the 2012 WMDFZ Conference. The League of Arab States should also take a substantive part in this business.

So, there is a lot of work to be done, and we have to continue it rolling up our sleeves.

Distinguished Mr. President,

The Russian Federation has spared no efforts in order that the issue of the implementation of the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East to spin its wheels. We consider that by applying collective efforts in 2010 we achieved this goal. We are sure that now we have the real chance to witness and participate in the substantive development of this process at the forthcoming Conference in Helsinki.

We might not miss this chance.