STATEMENT

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at the Second Session of the Preparatory Committee
for the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties
to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

Geneva, 22 April 2013
Mr. Chairman,

Russia considers strengthening of the NPT and of the nuclear non-proliferation regime as a whole as one the most important tasks and an absolute foreign policy priority. Therefore, we attach particular importance to attaining the highest possible effectiveness of the NPT review process.

We are convinced that consistent and balanced implementation and strengthening of the Treaty objectively correspond to the interests of all countries. We expect that during this review cycle through constructive cooperation between all delegations we will be able to achieve such results that will be conducive to the consolidation of international efforts aimed at intensive implementation of the NPT potential with a view to preventing proliferation of nuclear weapons and ensuring disarmament and peaceful nuclear cooperation.

We would like to draw the attention of all the delegations to the fourth P5 Conference chaired by the Russian Federation, which took place in Geneva at the end of last week, just on the eve of this session of the Preparatory Committee. The P5 countries reviewed the progress achieved in the implementation of the commitments adopted at the 2010 NPT Review Conference. Participants conducted a detailed discussion of all the three pillars of the Treaty – non-proliferation, peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and disarmament. The Conference resulted in the adoption of the Joint Statement of the P5 countries which will be circulated today as a document of the Preparatory Committee.

Mr. Chairman,

Let me turn to the most urgent and acute issue of this NPT review cycle. We need to put into practice the idea of creating a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other WMD as well as their means of delivery in the (WMDFZ). We deplore that despite the existing decisions, the Conference on the establishment of such a zone was never convened in 2012.
We believe that the co-sponsors of the Conference did not have the authority to postpone it. Russia never gave its consent to postponing the dates. No collective decision concerning this matter had been taken by the co-sponsors. We would have admitted the possibility of postponing the Conference, but only with the explicit consent of all states of the Middle East and an announcement of new concrete dates.

In the current situation we pursue active efforts with view of convening a Conference on the Middle East WMDFZ at an early date. We insist on fixing the date of the Conference without further delay. We believe that it could take place before the end of this year.

As a first step we deem it important to hold a preparatory meeting to be attended by all states of the Middle East. Its purpose would be to agree upon the procedural modalities and the agenda of the Conference.

Generally, the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free-zones (NWFZ) is an important instrument in enhancing regional and international security as well as strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation regime. The geographical expansion of such zones plays a major role in addressing the issue of providing legally binding security assurances to non-nuclear weapon states.

In 2011 Russia ratified Protocols I and II to the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty. We support the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia and are ready to work both with our P5 partners and with the countries of the region to finalize its legal status. This can and must be done before the end of this year.

Russia has completed all internal procedures necessary to accede to the Protocol to the Treaty of Southeast Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ). We consider it ready to be signed by nuclear-weapon states.

Mr. Chairman,

The current international developments demonstrate that the task of comprehensive strengthening of the nuclear non-proliferation regime has never
been more urgent. We strongly believe that today's challenges in the field of nuclear non-proliferation can and should be handled within the framework of the NPT and based upon the inviolability of its provisions, as well as in strict compliance with norms of international law and with due respect to the legitimate interests of all States in terms of security and development. It is essential to promote the establishment of an architecture of international cooperation in peaceful uses of nuclear energy which would reduce the risks of world-wide proliferation of sensitive technologies with scrupulous respect for the rights of the States that duly comply with their non-proliferation obligations to satisfy their legitimate energy needs with the use of nuclear energy. And it is not only about States fulfilling their non-proliferation obligations, but also about nuclear materials not falling into the hands of malicious non-State actors, primarily terrorists.

That is why Russia supports the promotion of the effectiveness of IAEA safeguards, but only in such a way that these safeguards be applied in an absolutely unbiased and objective manner. We expect the IAEA Director General to submit a report on this issue to the upcoming IAEA General Conference. We fully support the universalization of the Additional Protocol to the IAEA Safeguards Agreement while recognizing that the accession to the Additional Protocol is absolutely voluntary.

We support the work in the 1540 UNSC Committee and within the framework of the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism (GICNT). We attach great importance to the universalization of international legal mechanisms in the sphere of nuclear security and countering nuclear terrorism, namely the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and its Amendment. We call upon all parties concerned to accelerate the process of the ratification of this Amendment.

Mr. Chairman,
Russia has consistently supported the promotion of peaceful uses of nuclear energy worldwide. That is, of course, on the basis of compliance with the NPT commitments on the non-diversion of nuclear materials to military purposes. We believe that this could be made possible inter alia through the establishment of a modern and proliferation-resistant architecture of international cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy based on multilateral approaches to the nuclear fuel cycle.

The Fukushima-Daiichi nuclear accident demonstrated the necessity to strengthen international legal framework in order to ensure the safety of nuclear facilities at stages of their construction and operation. To this end the Russian Federation has put forward a number of initiatives on the improvement of relevant international legal norms. We are convinced that early adoption of our proposals will help to avoid or minimize the negative consequences of nuclear accidents in the future.

We are pleased to note certain signs showing that nuclear renaissance has recommenced after the Fukushima-Daiichi nuclear accident. Further study of the lessons learned after the accident should be pursued in an emotionless manner thus opening the way to a wide international discussion on the future of peaceful nuclear energy.

In this context we count upon the High-level Conference “Nuclear Energy in the 21st century”, which is to be held this June in Saint-Petersburg under the auspices of the IAEA, to become one of the key international events of 2013 and to give a new impetus to the development of the global safety of nuclear energy.

Mr. Chairman,

In 2012, Russia and the USA continued their active work on the implementation of the US-Russia Treaty on Measures for Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms. It is the principle of equal and undiminished security for all that the new Treaty is founded on. All its provisions
are based strictly on the principle parity. We believe that this is the approach which must invariably underpin international agreements as to the reduction and limitation of arms.

In our view, it is important to work towards creating the conditions for further steps in nuclear disarmament in accordance with Article VI of the NPT, with all States possessing nuclear weapons joining this process. It is worth mentioning that Article VI of the Treaty implies that not only nuclear-weapons States, but all other States join the process leading to universal and complete disarmament. Somehow that fact is often overlooked and the discussion focuses exclusively on nuclear disarmament. Such interpretation of Article VI does not reflect its real meaning.

The NPT Review Conference is the very forum for sending a strong political message to the international community proving the unity of all State-parties to the NPT in their support for the Treaty and their readiness to strictly adhere to their obligations under the Treaty.

While consistently implementing the provisions of the NPT, Russia seeks to substantially contribute to the achievement of the noble goals envisaged in the Treaty. We encourage all States to pursue constructive cooperation, including at the current session of the Committee, for the sake of our common and safe future.

Thank you for your attention.