CZECH REPUBLIC

Statement by

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First Secretary of the Permanent Mission of the Czech Republic to the UN

at

Third session of the Preparatory Committee to the NPT Cluster II

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Mr. Chairman, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates!

1. Since I am taking the floor for the first time, allow me to express my delegation’s sincere congratulations to you on your election as the Chairman of this Preparatory Committee meeting, as well as to the members of the bureau. I am confident that under your able leadership this Committee will be a successful session. You can be confident of our cooperation and support. The Czech Republic is fully aligned with the statement delivered by the European Union. I would like to add the following remarks in my national capacity.

2. As a non-nuclear-weapon State Party, the Czech Republic will continue to fulfil its obligations under the NPT and remain committed to the full implementation of its 2010 Action Plan.

3. We support the right of States Parties to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes but in full conformity with their non-proliferation obligations. We are of the view that noncompliance should be challenged and states should be held responsible and accountable for their violations. Therefore, it is of utmost importance for all States to take concentrated and resolute action to ensure strict compliance with their non-proliferation obligations and respond quickly and effectively to non-compliance.

4. In this regard, we would like to point out that any misuse of Article X could lead to further proliferation and as such should be reported to the UN Security Council. That is why we strictly insist on the return or dismantlement of all nuclear materials, technology and equipment provided by supplier states if requested in case of withdrawal from the Treaty. Moreover, all remaining items should be subject to the IAEA safeguards and serve peaceful uses only.

5. We have to pursue responsible peaceful uses to ensure high standard of safety and security measures and to avoid an increased risk of proliferation. In our view, the IAEA nuclear security program is an effective tool for addressing the threat of acquisition of nuclear materials or weapons by terrorists. This programme must be supported not only financially but also through a universal implementation of both legally binding instruments and recommended security and physical protection guidelines and measures.

6. In order to optimize the IAEA’s verification activities, the recognition of a new verification standard has been long time overdue. The Czech Republic has been a continuous supporter of establishing the Additional Protocol as the core standard of the verification process and the verification activities of the Agency as the key measure to ensure the peaceful nature of the nuclear programme. Without it the IAEA is unable to provide credible assurance of the absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities anywhere. We are proud that the IAEA has been able to provide such a declaration on the Czech Republic when the Additional Protocol entered into force for our country. Let me reiterate the call for universal recognition of the Additional Protocol as the core verification standard with a deterrent effect on nuclear proliferation.

Mr Chairman,
7. The Czech Republic strongly believes that all cases of non-compliance must be reported as it is required by the IAEA Statute to the Security Council and the General Assembly of the United Nations. In our view, there are a few cases that have been undermining the global non-proliferation system and international security for several years.

8. It is the DPRK that threatens both the regional and international security environment and jeopardises the authority of the Security Council, impedes functions of the IAEA and does not honour the commitments of the September 2005 Joint Statement to abandon all its nuclear weapons. The only way for a peaceful solution to the DPRK nuclear issue is the resumption of the Six Party Talks in the framework of which DPRK’s compliance with its obligations and commitments should be ensured. That is why it is necessary for all countries to co-operate closely in the implementation of the UNSCR 1874 in order to solve this nuclear crisis.

9. It is our belief that the final goal of the activities of the IAEA in the Iranian nuclear issue is to provide credible assurances about the absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities in Iran as well as to explain all past activities regarding possible military dimensions of the programme and finally to conclude that all nuclear material in Iran is used only for peaceful purposes. We note the recent developments including the agreements between Iran and the IAEA and Iran and E3+3 reached since November last year. Iran must urgently cooperate and provide all requested information in order to regain international confidence in the exclusively peaceful character of its programme.

10. In regard to the regional issues, we share the opinion that the Middle East deserves a comprehensive solution, including the elimination of all categories of weapons of mass destruction and a peace settlement in the region. We appreciate the efforts of the Facilitator and his team in preparing the Helsinki conference. We understand that the Conference is only a starting point of a long lasting process that could bring us to a mutually acceptable solution for all parties in the Middle East region.

11. The Czech Republic is convinced that complex challenges to the non-proliferation regime must be addressed by all existing instruments in a coordinated manner. In this respect, transparency and greater responsibility in the transfer of nuclear and nuclear-related items has an ever-increasing role, as the volume of nuclear trade rises and the nuclear industry becomes increasingly global. We are therefore proud and honoured to have been entrusted by Nuclear Suppliers Group’s forty-eight Participating Governments to chair this group from June 2013 to June 2014. The completion of the review of NSG control lists in 2013 gives clear evidence of the capability of the group to remain flexible, keeping pace with security challenges, advances in technology and market trends.

12. The Czech Republic has always advocated limiting the use of highly enriched uranium (HEU) due to related risks. By its virtue, it is a first choice nuclear weapon material. In support of that we have finalized the process of converting our research reactors from highly enriched to low enriched uranium fuel. We are very proud that we have become a HEU-free country, thus fulfilling our commitment made at the Nuclear Security Summit in 2012 in Seoul. The process of repatriation is a very demanding one and requires effective international cooperation and support of those who are able and willing to do so. The Czech Republic stands ready to offer its know-how and equipment to those who decide to dispose of their HEU.

Thank you for your kind attention.

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