2005 Review Conference of the States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

STATEMENT

by

THE CZECH REPUBLIC

in the Main Committee III of the Review Conference of the Non-Proliferation Treaty

New York, May 23, 2005

Check Against Delivery
Mr. Chairman,

The Czech Republic fully supports the views expressed in the statement of the European Union. However, let me couch upon some issues that are of particular importance to my country.

The Czech Republic consider peaceful uses of nuclear energy as one of the main pillars of the NPT. I would like to underline the importance of the nuclear energy as one of the important energy resources that could also contribute to the sustainable development. Research activities, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes are the inalienable right of all the States Parties to the NPT. Nevertheless all these activities have to be fully in conformity with the obligations resulting from the Treaty.

The Czech Republic shares the position of the European Union that main elements of the NPT in the field of peaceful uses are:

First, the strong system of international safeguards as the fundamental element of the Treaty, which helps to build confidence necessary for enhanced nuclear cooperation among States.

Second, the strict application of physical protection of nuclear materials.

Third, the effective national export/import controls over nuclear weapon related items, which in other words means introducing and implementing appropriate laws and regulations into national legislation to control export, transit, transshipment and re-export of these items.

We are convinced that the safe use of nuclear energy in the recipient state, confirmed by signing, ratifying and implementing international agreements, and an adequate national system of nuclear security are the necessary preconditions for appropriate export controls in the field of retransfers.

Mr. Chairman,

The Czech Republic believes that one of the conditions for new supply arrangements to non-nuclear weapon States is the verification standard of the NPT safeguards, represented by safeguards agreements based on document INFCIRC/153 (Corr.), supplemented by Additional Protocols. The Additional Protocol for the Czech Republic was signed in 1999 and is in force from the 1st July 2002. Initial declaration in compliance with relevant provisions of this Protocol was submitted to the Agency at the very end of the year 2002. Since that time a set of complementary accesses by the Agency has been carried out. We are of the view that universal implementation of Additional Protocols will give the IAEA credibility confidence about the absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities. Therefore we call all States Parties to the NPT to sign both their Safeguard agreements and Additional Protocols and put them into force as soon as possible.

The Czech Republic has a long tradition in co-operation with the IAEA in the field of safeguards implementation. Since the end of 90's the Czech Republic has been placed among donor member states of the IAEA and started to pay back the Agency's support we have received before. In this context let me also mention our financial contributions on regular basis to the IAEA Nuclear Security Fund to support technical programmes oriented on security issues. It is also worth mentioning that the IAEA safeguards inspectors have been attending the training courses at our NPPs. Many of new Agency safeguards tools and equipment have been tested and calibrated at our facilities.
Recognising the importance of strengthening the international safeguards through improvements of its effectiveness and efficiency, we launched and applied the Czech Republic Support Programme to the IAEA Safeguards. Our programme is oriented at training, expert advice and development of new safeguards analytical methods.

I am but not least I would like to point out the fact that the Czech Republic is one of the three member States of the IAEA, which officially confirmed its financial support for three consecutive years for reconfiguring of the IAEA safeguards information system.

Mr. Chairman,

The Czech Republic welcomes the establishment of the Global Threat Reduction Initiative and fully supports the outcomes of the Conference held in Vienna in September 2004. Soon after this Conference took place, the Czech Republic concluded the agreement with the IAEA for reprocessing of high--enriched uranium from our research reactors to the country of its origin. The first transfer was realised at the end of the year 2004 and the Czech Republic intends to continue in this activity with the aim to replace all high--enriched fuel assemblies by fuel assemblies enriched in less than 20%.

The growing risk of misuse of vulnerable nuclear material, and other radioactive sources represents a serious threat for the international community. The Czech Republic strongly supports new activities in the area of prevention against nuclear terrorism including the Agency’s Plan of Action. One of the most important tools of prevention against the nuclear terrorism is, in our view, strengthening of the physical protection of nuclear materials. The Czech Republic supported the proposal to convene a Diplomatic Conference and “Basic Proposal”, which contains amendments to the Convention in respect of combating nuclear terrorism. The Czech Republic has always attached high priority to implementation of the CPPNM with regard not only to international transfers but also to domestic use, storage and transport of nuclear materials.

The Czech Republic, being aware of the essential role of the IAEA in preventing and combating nuclear terrorism, has joined the IAEA illicit trafficking database. I dare say that, in co-operation with the national enforcement agencies, we have successfully revealed and stopped several illicit transfers of nuclear materials. In this context I would like to bring to your attention the importance of the Proliferation Security Initiative in preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. In our view it has bridged a gap that existed in the system of export controls.

Finally, Mr. Chairman,

The Czech Republic has strongly supported the United Nations Council Resolution 1540, adopted on 23rd April 2004, which requires all United Nations member states to establish effective national systems of export control and implementation of appropriate laws and regulations in order to prevent proliferation of nuclear materials and sensitive equipment and technology. The Czech Republic has fulfilled its obligations resulting from the Resolution and submitted its national report by the requested date. In the national report, the Czech Republic provided information about the implementing of the obligations resulting from the NPT Convention on Physical Protection of Nuclear Materials, the international control regimes strengthening the NPT and measures accepted to combat proliferation of nuclear terrorism.

Thank you for your attention.