STATEMENT

by the Delegation of the Russian Federation

at Main Committee I

of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties

to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

New York, 3-28 May 2010
Mr. Chairman,

Yesterday, the Russian Federation conducted a briefing with the presentation of the booklet entitled “Practical Steps of the Russian Federation in the field of Nuclear Disarmament”.

We provided concrete numbers to demonstrate a real contribution of Russia to the implementation of its obligations under Article VI of the NPT.

In my today’s statement I am going to focus on certain principal steps taken by the Russian Federation in the field of nuclear disarmament.

The Russian Federation, being aware of its special responsibility as a nuclear power for fulfilling the obligations under Article VI of the NPT, continues in the spirit of good will the in-depth, irreversible and verifiable reductions of its nuclear potential.

The signature in Prague, on 8 April this year, 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 marked an important step in this direction.

The new Treaty replaces one of the most historically significant disarmament agreements, i.e. the US-Soviet Treaty on the Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (START) of 31 July 1991 that expired on 4 December 2009.

The START fulfilled its historic role in ensuring international peace, strategic stability and security. It served a foundation for creating a qualitatively new atmosphere of trust, openness and predictability in strategic offensive reductions which is now reflected in the new Treaty. The in-depth reductions in strategic offensive arms carried out by the two countries since the end of the Cold War have made the world more stable and safe, dissipated the feeling of persistent threat hanging over the peoples of our and other countries, and allowed the shift from the era of “co-existence” to the period of partnership and mutually beneficial cooperation thus creating a radically different political and military climate in the world.
Belarus, Kazakhstan and Ukraine were the Parties to the old START along with Russia and the US. The historic role of this Treaty would not be complete without the substantial efforts undertaken by these States to implement it, or without the overall fulfillment of commitments under the 1992 Lisbon Protocol. The responsible choice of Belarus, Kazakhstan and Ukraine in favor of the agreed removal of nuclear weapons from their territories and accession to the NPT as non-nuclear-weapon States strengthened their security and positively affected their strategic stability in general. On 4 December 2009, the Presidents of Russia and of the United States confirmed the security assurances to Belarus, Kazakhstan and Ukraine, recorded in the Budapest Memoranda of 5 December 1994.

The provisions of the new Treaty stipulate that each Party shall reduce and limit its strategic offensive arms so that seven years after its entry into force and thereafter the aggregate numbers do not exceed:

- 700 for deployed intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), submarine launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs) and heavy bombers;
- 1,550 for warheads on them;
- 800 for deployed and non-deployed launchers of ICBMs and SLBMs, and heavy bombers. This limit brings deployed and non-deployed launchers, as well as heavy bombers into the legal scope of the Treaty. It allows restraining the upload potential of the Parties (i.e. the capability of rapid increase in number of their deployed warheads in crisis situations) and creates an additional impetus for elimination or conversion of strategic offensive arms subject to reductions.

Thereby, Russia and the US have clearly demonstrated once again their commitment to substantial reductions of strategic offensive arms. The Parties have agreed to cut down by one third the aggregate numbers of warheads (the 2,200 ceiling under the Moscow Treaty) and by more than a half the aggregate limit of strategic delivery vehicles (1,600 delivery vehicles under the START Treaty with no limits for delivery vehicles under the Moscow Treaty).
While negotiating the new START, we had in mind that nuclear disarmament was impossible without taking into account the developments in the field of strategic defensive arms, and that there was no existing limits on the deployment of strategic missile defense systems. The defensive systems, in particular, the missile defense, can play both stabilizing and destabilizing roles. The establishment of such systems on a block basis leads to the emergence of new strategic dividing lines and increases tension in relations between the States.

With the entry into force of the new START, the Treaty between the US and Russia on Strategic Offensive Reductions (SORT) of 24 May 2002 will be no longer effective.

On the whole, as of January 1, 2010, the Russian Party had eliminated about 1,600 launchers of intercontinental ballistic missiles (hereinafter the “ICBMs”) and submarine launched ballistic missiles (hereinafter the “SLBMs”), 3,100 ICBMs and SLBMs, 47 nuclear submarines, and 67 heavy bombers. As of the beginning of this year, the Russian Party had about 800 deployed strategic delivery vehicles and 3,900 warheads attributed to them under the START Treaty. Compared to the data provided for in our Report on Article VI to the 2005 NPT Review Conference, these numbers demonstrate a growing tangible contribution of the Russian Federation to the cause of nuclear disarmament.

Mr. Chairman,

We consider it an essential task to pursue the process of multilateral disarmament under the auspices of the United Nations.

In this context we would like to recall the Russia-China draft Treaty on the Prevention of the Placement of Weapons in Outer Space, Threat or Use of Force Against Outer Space Objects submitted for consideration to the participants of the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva as well as our proposal to universalize the US-Russia Treaty on the Elimination of the Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles.
It is imperative now as never before that nuclear disarmament initiatives would not be left on paper but translated into practical steps. The earliest possible entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) should become an essential step towards nuclear disarmament. All relevant conditions are in place taking into account positive signals coming from the US about the change in its attitude to this Treaty. We insistently call on all countries, and especially those whose accession to the CTBT is necessary for its entry into force, to sign and ratify the Treaty as soon as possible. The voluntary moratorium on nuclear tests, though significant as a measure, cannot substitute the relevant legal obligations.

Mr. Chairman,

The above facts and practical steps taken by the Russian Federation to comply with its obligations confirm our intention to progressively move towards a real nuclear disarmament as required by Article VI of the NPT.

Along with that we are building on the assumption that the elimination of nuclear weapons can be discussed only as an ultimate goal of general and complete disarmament in the circumstances of strengthening strategic stability and strictly complying with the principle of equal security for all. In addition, the following measures must also be implemented:

- Furthering the process of nuclear disarmament by all nuclear-weapons States and their "smooth" involvement in the efforts being already undertaken by Russia and the USA;
- Preventing deployment of weapons in outer space;
- Controlled cessation of building up conventional weapons in combination with a parallel addressing other international problems including settlement of regional conflicts.

The Russian Federation is committed to the noble goal of freeing the world from nuclear threat. We call upon other States possessing nuclear weapons to also join this process.