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MISSION PERMANENTE
DE LA REPUBLIQUE DU
BELARUS AUPRES DE L'OFFICE
DES NATIONS UNIES ET DES
AUTRES ORGANISATIONS
INTERNATIONALES A GENEVE

SECOND SESSION OF THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE
FOR THE 2010 REVIEW CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE TREATY
ON THE NON-PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

Statement by H.E. Ambassador
Sergei Aleinik, Permanent Representative
of the Republic of Belarus

Geneva, 29 April 2008

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Mr. Chairman,

Allow me on behalf of the Delegation of the Republic of Belarus to congratulate you upon the election to the post of the Chairman of the Second Session of the Preparatory Committee of the 2010 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference. I am confident that under your leadership the Parties to the NPT will be able to contribute significantly to the process of preparation to the 2010 Review Conference. You may count on full support and cooperation of the Belarusian Delegation.

We hope that in the course of the second session we will have an opportunity to concentrate on a Substantive work to discuss in a constructive manner main issues on the Agenda with the aim of revitalizing the Treaty and strengthening the NPT based non-proliferation regime.

Our delegation associates itself with the statement made by Ambassador of Indonesia on behalf of the Group of Non-Aligned States Parties.

Mr. Chairman,

Over almost 40 years the NPT has been a fundamental element of the international security. Belarus sees the NPT in unity of its three pillars: prevention of the spread of nuclear weapons, guarantees to inalienable right to peaceful use of atomic energy, conducting the negotiations in the spirit of the good will on effective measures on prevention of nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament. We also deem important to discuss regional aspects of the Treaty, based on the decision reached at the Review Conferences in 1995 and 2000.

Belarus was the first to renounce voluntarily the possession of nuclear weapons, left on its territory after the break up of the Soviet Union. Confirming our full commitments to the obligations under the NPT, we call not to lose sight of the strategic goal of the NPT – nuclear disarmament. In this respect, statements, made by several Nuclear Weapon States on their steps for reduction of strategic nuclear weapons have definitely positive meaning. However, those steps cannot be considered sufficient, especially against the background of further perfection and development of new types of nuclear weapons, as well as mere preservation of defensive doctrines, rationalizing use of nuclear weapons. The efforts of the international community on nuclear disarmament should be supplemented by tangible steps, taken by Nuclear Weapon States both within existing and future international treaties obligations, as well as unilaterally.

Belarus, as a country affected in the largest extent by the Chernobyl disaster, stands firmly on its position of unacceptability of use of nuclear weapons and the threat of their use as a means to resolve any international disputes.

We welcome the outlined headway in bringing into force the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty. The progress has become feasible with the growth of the number of ratifications of the CTBT, especially those listed in Annex II. We call upon all the states, whose accession to the CTBT will bring it into force, to ratify the Treaty as soon as possible. We believe that observing moratorium on

nuclear testing is a significant measure but it can not substitute for legal obligations arising from the CTBT.

Mr. Chairman,

Belarus holds firm position on the issues of strengthening of the Non-Proliferation regime. With the existence of terrorists' threat in the modern world the risk of proliferation of nuclear weapons and nuclear related materials and technologies is a major challenge to the international security and stability. Such a challenge requires consolidation of efforts from the international community, in particular comprehensive adherence to the Security Council Resolution 1540 (2004) and promotion of universality of the Convention on physical protection of nuclear material and the Convention against nuclear terrorism. We note with satisfaction the appearance and successful development of other international instruments such as the Proliferation Security Initiative and Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism.

We highly appreciate the role and positive input of the IAEA and its Director General Dr. Mohamed ElBaradei in strengthening non-proliferation and insuring compliance with the NPT. In this regard our country strongly supports the initiatives aimed at strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation regime and attaches great importance to the introduction of a safeguards system based on Additional Protocols to the Safeguards Agreements.

We acknowledge the role of international export control regimes in preventing proliferation of nuclear weapons and nuclear related materials and technologies. Belarus fully implements its obligations arising from the membership in the Nuclear Suppliers Group.

Another direction for further strengthening of the non-proliferation regime is a ban on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. The Parties to the Conference on Disarmament should start without further delay negotiations on Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty as well as on the issues of nuclear disarmament, negative security assurances and prevention of armed race in outer space.

Mr. Chairman,

In the framework of the NPT review process specific role belongs to the issue of the security assurances. Getting legally binding security assurances by Non-Nuclear States is a matter of trust and predictability in the relations among the countries, contributes to strengthening of nuclear non-proliferation regime and promotes the universality of the Treaty. Mere provision of such assurances is a matter of importance. However more important is abiding by the existing assurances, as it turns out to be a challenge for some countries.

As it was noted earlier, Belarus voluntarily denounced the possibility of possessing the nuclear weapons and acceded to the NPT in 1993 as a Non-Nuclear State. Russia, the United States and United Kingdom welcomed this decision and signed together with Belarus the Memorandum on Security Assurances in 1994 in Budapest. According to the Memorandum the aforementioned countries committed themselves to respecting independence and sovereignty of the Republic of Belarus and, in particular, not to exert any economic pressure on it in exchange for the voluntary renunciation by our

country of the possession of nuclear weapons. Several years have passed and the United States have forgotten about its obligations under the Memorandum and has introduced in 2007 the economic sanctions against some of the Belarusian petro-chemical companies. This unfriendly action does not only radically undermine the US credibility as a partner. It demonstrates selective approach of the United States to international law obligations. What is the real value of the assurances, taken upon by the biggest Nuclear Weapon State? In this context we once again stress the importance of concluding an international legally binding document on security assurances.

Mr. Chairman,

While reviewing the NPT, we should remember one of the important objectives of the Non-Proliferation regime, that is safeguarding peaceful use of nuclear technologies.

Nowadays we witness that the international community becomes more and more engaged in further development of peaceful nuclear technologies in various spheres, including energy production, healthcare, agriculture, environment protection, etc. The number of countries, interested in creating national nuclear programmes is growing.

We are confident that the IAEA has all necessary tools to enable equal and indiscriminate access to all interested countries to the nuclear energy benefits. Many of these tools already exist and should be used for the purposes of development. At the same time any State, pursuing its peaceful nuclear programme, should act transparently and in accordance to the letter and spirit of its obligations.

Mr. Chairman,

The issue of promotion of universality of the NPT is acute today as never before. We remain concerned about the level of futility of the attempts of the NPT States Parties aimed at promoting accession to the Treaty of the States that operate non-safeguarded nuclear facilities. In this regard, we would like to stress once again the importance of providing security assurances to Non-Nuclear Weapon States that could be an additional incentive for accession to the Treaty.

In the course of the current review process due attention should be paid to regional aspects of the NPT implementation, notably the issue of creation of nuclear weapon free zones. Success in this task will undoubtedly strengthen non-proliferation regime and contribute to nuclear disarmament.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion let me express strong hope that in the course of the current review process the positions of Nuclear and Non-Nuclear Weapon States will be accommodated, flexible and rational approach will prevail and mutual compromise will be reached on all issues of the Treaty implementation. From our side we will cooperate in a constructive manner to achieve these goals.

Thank you for your attention.