



REPUBLIC OF BELARUS

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First Committee General Debate**

STATEMENT

by

His Excellency Alyaksandr SYCHOU

**Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs
of the Republic of Belarus**

New York, 5 October 2004

Mr. Chairman,

The delegation of the Republic of Belarus congratulates you upon your election to the post of the Chairman of the First Committee. You can count on our support and cooperation in your activities.

Mr. Chairman,

The world has not become more secure and calmer for the passed year. The threat of proliferation and falling of weapons of mass destruction into the hands of terrorists and terrorist organizations capable of using them against civilians is still the 'sword of Damocles' for the society. Every day dozens of people are becoming the victims of antipersonnel landmines, small arms and light weapons.

We are confident that the only way to solve the problems lays in the multilateral approach and depends upon the efforts of the whole international community. The current problems also require strengthening of the UN central role and coordination of its actions with the regional organizations.

Unfortunately, the First Committee remains the only UN forum in the area of international security, disarmament and nonproliferation with the full-fledged agenda and capacity for taking principle decisions. Neither the Disarmament Commission nor the Conference on Disarmament have been able to reach consensus on the agenda.

This situation cannot but arouse concern of Belarus as a state that emphasises the role of the mentioned organs in strengthening international security. We are convinced that their potential has not been exhausted, we just need the political will of all countries interested in real consolidation of the UN central role in ensuring peace and security.

Mr. Chairman,

Belarus welcomes the UN Security Council active role in preventing proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. We are ready to co-operate with the Security Council Committee established by resolution 1540.

Taking into consideration today's situation in the field of international security and a real threat of creation and use of the "dirty" bomb by terrorists, the Republic of Belarus intends to make its contribution to the international community efforts. We are convinced that resolution 57/50 *"Prohibition of the Development and Manufacture of New Types of Weapons of Mass Destruction and New Systems of Such Weapons"* initiated by Belarus supplements the Security Council resolution 1540 and is aimed at reducing the threat of weapons of mass destruction proliferation.

Belarus also welcomes the Proliferation Security Initiative and shares its objectives. In conformity with our national legislation we are ready to cooperate with the Proliferation Security Initiative participating states in conducting active measures to counter proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems.

At the same time we emphasise that all activities aimed at preventing proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems should be based on the multilateral approach and cannot undermine the confidence of the international community in the methods and mechanisms developed within the framework of the current non-proliferation regimes and appropriate international structures.

The Non-Proliferation Treaty is the most important instrument providing the international community with a consistent program of action in the field of nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation. In spite of the absence of coordinated substantial recommendations of the

Preparatory Committee, we consider holding of the Non-proliferation Treaty Review Conference in 2005 as a real possibility for the international community to overcome the inertia and make a step forward to reaching the goals stipulated in the Final document of the 2000 Review Conference.

Belarus stands for the earliest entry into force of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). We call upon all states that are not party to the CTBT to accede to it without delay.

One of the most important issues is the prohibition of the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. The Conference on Disarmament has to proceed with the consultations on this problem. An international legal regulation should be also applied to the problem of the military use of outer space, particularly with respect to banning the deployment of offensive weapons in space.

Mr. Chairman,

The Republic of Belarus pursues a responsible and consistent foreign policy aimed at fulfilling its commitments in the sphere of international security, disarmament and nonproliferation.

As one of the states that adopted the Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation (HCOB) Belarus stands for the establishment of comprehensive cooperation between HCOB and the United Nations.

We attach primary importance to the fulfillment of national obligations under the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of the Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction. In compliance with the Convention provisions our country has to destroy its landmine stockpiles within four years. Belarus requires considerable financial and technological resources to ensure the elimination of more than 4 million anti-personnel mines inherited after the breakup of the Soviet Union. In this connection we appeal to governments, international governmental and non-governmental organizations to provide technical, technological and financial assistance to Belarus in its landmine stockpiles elimination efforts.

Belarus advocates the expansion of the transparency measures in armaments and regularly submits data to the UN Register on conventional arms. We also submit information about the implementation of the UN Program of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons in accordance with resolution 56/24 V "Illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects".

Our delegation supports the activity of the Open-ended working group to negotiate an international instrument to enable states to identify and trace, in a timely and reliable manner, illicit traffic in small arms and light weapons.

Belarus attaches special importance to developing confidence-building measures on regional and bilateral levels considering this issue to be one of the priorities of our foreign policy. As a result of the active cooperation with the neighboring countries Belarus has completed setting up of the "belt of good-neighborliness" along its borders. The agreements on complimentary confidence- and security-building measures were concluded in 2004 with Latvia and Poland. We consider these agreements as a real contribution to the consolidation of the regional and European security systems.

In conclusion our delegation would like to express hope that the international community will develop reliable mechanisms of countering new risks and threats. The Republic of Belarus, on its part, will continue to remain an active participant in this process.

Thank you.