

**Statement by the Russian Representative during thematic discussion in the
First Committee of the 61st UN GA Session on item “Nuclear Weapons”**

October 10, 2006

Madam Chairperson,

As President Vladimir V. Putin stated yesterday, Russia condemns the nuclear testing in the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea. Tremendous damage has been inflicted on the process of non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. We hope that the DPRK will return to negotiations process.

We have repeatedly stated that such a step, irrespective of its motives, can only aggravate the problems existing in the Korean Peninsula; it is fraught with the danger to peace, security and stability in the region and can undermine the nuclear non-proliferation regime. The demarche of the MFA of Russia on this issue demands that the DPRK should take immediate steps to return to the NPT regime and resume the Six-Party Talks.

Recent developments confirm once again the importance of nuclear weapons issue and remind us of the need of strict compliance by all states with their international obligations in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation and measures to prevent these deadly weapons from falling into the hands of terrorists.

Madam Chairperson,

Russia has ratified the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism that was adopted on its initiative. This document creates a solid basis for international cooperation in combating terrorism and WMD proliferation. The global initiative to suppress acts of nuclear terrorism co-sponsored by the Presidents of Russia and the United States is its logical continuation. Its goal is to assist the implementation of UNSC resolution 1540 and ensure inevitable prosecution of terrorists, improve the procedures of accounting,

control and protection of nuclear materials and facilities, and promote cooperation in developing technical means of combating nuclear terrorism.

Another initiative by the President of Russia Vladimir V. Putin to establish international nuclear fuel-cycle centers has also been highly appreciated by the international community. This initiative provides an alternative to the development of sensitive elements of nuclear fuel cycle, enrichment and reprocessing of spent nuclear fuel. We are going to work together with all interested countries in order to finalize and further develop those initiatives with active involvement of the IAEA.

Madam Chairperson,

Russia implements its obligations on gradual reduction of its nuclear arsenals within the framework of its agreements with the United States, as well as unilaterally. Over the recent years this process has acquired additional momentum.

During the past NPT Review Conference Russia provided concrete information on its nuclear weapons reductions. At present, the aggregate number of Russian nuclear weapons stocks is more than five times less than in 1991.

We continue to implement the *Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START)*. The Russian Federation reduced its strategic nuclear arsenals much faster than envisaged by the START. Despite implementation of its obligations well ahead of schedule Russia has pursued the policy towards further elimination of strategic offensive armaments. We proposed to our US partners to launch a negotiating process, because the START expires in December 2009.

The Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty (SORT) together with Russian-American Declaration on New Strategic Relationship of 24 May, 2002 is a major step in nuclear disarmament important for the development of the system of international security in the 21st century. The SORT actually ensures the continuity of nuclear disarmament and arms control process, and it is a tangible contribution to implementation by Russia of the NPT's Article VI. Under the Moscow Treaty Russia and United States must additionally reduce the levels of their *strategic* nuclear warheads by the end of 2012 approximately further three times as compared to the thresholds set out by the START Treaty as of the end of 2001. The

President of Russia Vladimir V. Putin has repeatedly stated that Russia is prepared to reduce on a reciprocal basis its nuclear arsenal to the level of 1500 warheads or less.

The non-strategic nuclear arsenal of Russia has been reduced by four times and is placed, at present, within the national boundaries at central storage depots of the MoD. We believe it is important that following Russia's example all non-strategic nuclear weapons and their associated infrastructure be relocated to the territory of states that possess them.

Our future policy will continue to be guided by the need to ensure the *irreversibility* of nuclear weapons reductions.

Madam Chairperson,

We attach particular importance to the entry into force of the *Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT)*. Russia has ratified this Treaty. The CTBT is called to reliably prevent qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons and strengthen the irreversibility of their ongoing reductions. The Treaty also is an essential element of the system of international security and prevention of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. We welcome the states that signed and ratified the CTBT. We welcome the ratification of this Treaty by Vietnam. We hope that the remaining ten states from the list of 44 will make necessary steps for an early accession to the Treaty. It is also important that until that time the moratorium on test explosions of nuclear weapons and any other nuclear explosions is respected.

The Russian Federation regards the elaboration of the *Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty* as an important step in the field of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. We continue to advocate an early compromise on a balanced program of work of the Conference on Disarmament so as to resume talks on the FMCT; we have made substantive practical steps to reach this compromise.

We welcome the signing on September 8, 2006 of the Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone Treaty in Central Asia. Undoubtedly, this is an important event in our efforts in the field of nuclear non-proliferation and strengthening the NPT regime.

Madam Chairperson,

Through its practical actions Russia has proven that it stands by its NPT commitments. We are interested in strict compliance and strengthening of this crucially important Treaty. We continue to believe that all challenges and threats to the non-proliferation regime can and should be dealt with on the basis of the NPT.

We call upon all states to strictly comply with their commitments under the IAEA Safeguards Agreement and develop effective measures aimed at prevention of illicit trafficking of nuclear equipment, technologies and materials. We continue to call for strengthening the IAEA safeguards system and universalisation of the Additional Safeguards Protocol with the Agency so as to allow it to verify the use of nuclear materials and equipment for strictly peaceful purposes and ensure transparency of national nuclear programs. Russia has developed and is implementing a national program of scientific and technological support for the Agency's safeguards.

Together with the United States Russia is implementing a safety project for dangerous radioactive materials in the framework of the IAEA Action Plan to prevent nuclear terrorism.

Madam Chairperson,

It is important to bear in mind that the reduction of nuclear weapons by nuclear weapons states *does not happen in vacuum*.

The process and prospects of nuclear weapons reductions are closely connected with the implementation of key agreements in the area of arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation. Naturally, they are influenced by the increased funding of military preparations in a number of countries and emergence of new weapons systems including antiballistic missile defense. Doubtless, the *deployment of weapons in outer space* would become a strong destabilizing factor. It would seriously affect the entire process of disarmament, arms control and international security.

By and large, we proceed from the assumption that total elimination of nuclear weapons is possible. This goal can be achieved only through a gradual and

phased movement forward without artificially leaping ahead, on the basis of an integrated approach that involves all nuclear weapons states, and of course, provided that strategic stability is maintained and the principle of undiminished security for all is respected.

We will be guided exactly by this approach in determining our position concerning draft resolutions on issues related to nuclear weapons. As in the past we are prepared to support realistic and balanced ideas and proposals.

Thank you very much.