

**Постоянное
представительство
Российской Федерации
при Организации
Объединённых Наций**



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of the Russian Federation
to the United Nations**

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STATEMENT

**BY MR. VICTOR VASILIEV,
ALTERNATE HEAD OF THE RUSSIAN DELEGATION
TO THE FIRST COMMITTEE OF THE 63RD SESSION
OF THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

CLUSTER I: NUCLEAR WEAPONS

New York, 15 October 2008

Nuclear disarmament is one of the crucial tracks in world policy which is called upon to ensure strategic stability on the global, as well as regional levels. Without progressive movement in this direction, we will not only fail to succeed in duly strengthening the NPT regime, but also in creating an atmosphere of trust and good neighborhood between States.

Based on this premise, the Russian side has been negotiating for three years with the current US administration on a legally binding successor to the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) which will expire 5 December, 2009. We have to admit that even quite long and intensive contacts have not yet led us to an agreement providing for continuity and predictability in strategic offensive arms reductions.

We propose to our American partners to take all the best from the START and preserve it in the new arrangement. Such an instrument could establish, in a legally binding form, lower and verifiable ceilings for strategic delivery systems (ICBMs, SLBMs and heavy bombers) and warheads that they carry.

We appreciate that our position was supported by Foreign ministers of the Collective Security Treaty Organization Member States in the Declaration on Strategic Stability and Strategic Arms Control Issues.

Our approaches to the problem of nuclear disarmament are defined in the Concept of foreign policy of the Russian Federation. We are prepared to negotiate not only with the USA, but also with other nuclear powers with a goal to reduce strategic arms down to a minimum level adequate for maintaining strategic stability. For the sake of ensuring our common security, we support collective efforts to address possible missile threats and impart a global character to the regime of the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-range and Shorter-range Missiles (INF Treaty).

Russia consistently opposes arms race, especially in the field of nuclear weapons, is against development and deployment of destabilizing types of weapon, including new ones. It concerns, in particular, low-yield nuclear charges, as well as ICBMs equipped with non-nuclear warheads and global ABM system with its components placed near the borders of our States.

We reaffirm our fundamental support to the CTBT. We consider this Treaty as one of the crucial international mechanisms aimed at strengthening of the non-proliferation regime and nuclear arms reduction.

The fact that the fate of the Treaty remains unclear can not but raise concerns. In this regard we call upon those States that have not yet signed or ratified the Treaty, to do so immediately. We especially call upon those 9 States whose ratification is essential for entry into force of the CTBT.

We consider establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones (NWFZ) as an efficient measure of strengthening the international regime of nuclear non-proliferation and enhancing the level of regional and international security. We stand for further development of such zones.

Our reservations to protocols to the NWFZs treaties cover only exceptional situations incompatible with the implementation by the parties to the Zone of their obligations, and they conform with universally accepted norms of international law.

We support the NWFZ Treaty in Central Asia signed 8 September, 2006 in Semipalatinsk (Kazakhstan). We are confident that the Semipalatinsk Treaty will facilitate the strengthening of peace and stability in the region, and make a considerable contribution to the struggle against international terrorism and help prevent nuclear materials and technologies from getting into the hands of terrorists. The agreement has been drafted in full compliance with recommendations of the UN Disarmament Commission and conforms with international law standards in this field. We welcome the beginning of the ratification process of the Semipalatinsk Treaty by Turkmenistan. We expect similar moves from remaining states in the region.

We are prepared for settlement of remaining issues in regard to the NWFZ in South East Asia (SEA) within the framework of the dialogue between nuclear powers and the ASEAN member countries. It would pave the way to the signing of the respective Protocol on Security Assurances to the NWFZ members in the SEA.

We are committed to the provisions of the resolution on the Middle East adopted by the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference. Russia, as a member of the “quartet” of international mediators on the Middle East settlement, consistently supports the efforts to create the zone free from nuclear and other WMD in this region.

Russia respects the nuclear-weapon-free status of Mongolia. We reaffirm negative security assurances to Ulan-Bator. We stay open to further discussion of issues on the strengthening of a nuclear-free status of that country.

We consider provision and implementation of security assurances to the NPT non-nuclear weapon States as a core principle for strengthening of the regime of the Treaty. Undoubtedly, such assurances make a contribution to nuclear non-proliferation and promote the NPT universalization. One should not forget also the fact that negative security assurances were one of the key issues at the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference when the Treaty was extended indefinitely.

The Russian Federation has already provided such assurances to more than 100 states that acceded to respective treaties on nuclear-weapon-free zones (Tlatelolco and Rarotonga Treaties).

In 1995, together with other nuclear powers, Russia co-sponsored UNSC Resolution 984 under which positive security assurances were granted, as well as national statements of nuclear powers on negative assurances were taken into account.

We consistently stand for the soonest development of an international convention on assurances to the States not possessing nuclear weapon and against the use or a threat to use nuclear weapon. We proceed from the understanding that such a convention should take into account reservations regarding the situations when nuclear weapons may be used in accordance with military doctrines of nuclear powers.

We support the idea of implementing the decision adopted by the Conference on Disarmament in 1998 to re-establish the Ad-hoc Committee on negative security assurances with a negotiating mandate.