

**PERMANENT MISSION OF SERBIA AND MONTENEGRO
TO THE UNITED NATIONS IN GENEVA**

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CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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STATEMENT

by

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G E N E V A

Madame President,

At the outset let me congratulate you on your successful presiding over the CD in the past month. My country, as the observer, follows with keen interest current discussions aimed towards overcoming the problems that for years cause stalemate in its work. We hope that the CD will soon be able to resume its mandate as the sole international body mandated to conduct negotiations in disarmament. My country supports the efforts of the Member States to that end and sees the 5A initiative as the solid basis for further discussion that could result with a consensus on the program of work during this year's session.

My Government fully respects and implements the fundamental principles of the UN Charter in its international relations. In line with our sense of shared responsibility, we find it useful to bring updates on the relevant standpoints and activities of the Member States regarding disarmament and the related issues before the CD. It is of our stand that the more transparency and exchange of information in this field we have, the more we contribute to the enhancement of mutual confidence and promotion of peace and stability in the world. I take the floor today with this very aim, to inform the members of the CD where we are at this point in implementing our international obligations and what is ahead of us. I will read some highlights and the full text will be available shortly. I apologize in advance for any possible indulgence this may cause to you.

- The Ottawa Landmine Ban Convention -

Let me start with the Ottawa process as one of the areas where Serbia and Montenegro has lately made a significant brake-through. To remind, during the recent meetings of the Standing Committees of the Ottawa process, my delegations tried to portray a clearer picture how we plan to fulfill our new obligations and what are our major problems and needs. As I have already mentioned in my statement than, by depositing the ratification instruments to the Secretary General of the UN, on 18 September 2003, Serbia and Montenegro formally acceded to the Convention. Pursuant to the rules defined therein, obligations of Serbia and Montenegro under the Convention are due on 31 March 2004.

This was our modest contribution to the universality of the Ottawa Convention, which marked its fifth anniversary only on 1 March. By joining the Convention by Serbia and Montenegro, Greece and Turkey, in 2003, the entire region of the South-Eastern Europe proved its full commitment to free their people of the scourge of the APMs. This is, undoubtedly, yet another positive development that will further enhance the feeling of security among ordinary people and promote mutual confidence, peace and stability in the entire region. Having in mind what this region has gone through only few years back, we deem this has much more substantial meaning than a pure increase in the number of the State Parties to the Convention. Having said that, I have to reiterate that our task has not been fully accomplished until our region is free from even a single activity which is in contravention to the letter and spirit of the Convention, though conducted by an individual terrorist. Unfortunately, at this point it still has not been the case in some parts

of my country, despite all the Government's efforts to bring peace and stability to each and every corner of the country and the prevailing positive development in our region.

We are fully aware that true business is yet ahead of us. Firstly, under the provisions of the Convention we have to destroy about 1,3 million APMs within relatively short time limit. We deem it realistic to fulfill this task in three years provided the necessary resources have been obtained. Preparations for this respectful task have been underway for some time but we must count greatly on the international assistance. To that end we particularly look towards the leading States Parties to the Convention that are CD members as well and do hope that their understanding would not lack. We commend all those that have already expressed readiness to provide help, Canada, as the coordinator of the NAMSA Trust Fund in particular.

We are also working on the initial report under article 7, which is due by 28 August this year. The ministries in charge in both Republics have been informed on the need to consider the possibility of amending their respective Penal Codes in accordance with the article 9 of the Convention.

Though not easy, madam President, I am convinced that the problem of the destruction of the stockpile will be solved somehow and within the time limits. However, my worry is how to find efficient way to ease human sufferings of thousands of victims of the APMs and their families throughout the world! To my firm conviction this is by far more important and complex obligation to fulfill. It has no time limits and its multifaceted complexity that we have to deal with demands much more than our honest goodwill and sympathies. This problem of rehabilitation and socio-economic reintegration of the APM victims is even more serious in the developing countries and the countries in transition, as is my country. For all said this issue deserves to be much more in focus during our preparations for and at the forthcoming first Review Conference in Nairobi. What we really need is not only protracting discussion, but rather very concerted collective action, followed by as firm determination of all States parties to have the job done as the one concerning the stockpiles destruction.

Madame President,

Let me stress some of the issues that we attach particular importance to and invest most of our efforts to join the current international trends and activities ever since our full reintegration into the international community in late 2000:

- **Non-proliferation of the WMD** - Serbia and Montenegro is firmly committed to the nonproliferation of the WMD and actively participates in the international efforts to suppress it. It pays full attention to this issue particularly within the context of the rising global threat of and the need to fight the terrorism around the globe. We consider that strict national control regime is of particular importance, specially having in mind that our region, due to protracted crisis, has been fertile soil for all kind of illegal activities, including all kind of organized crime. As such, it provides a favorable environment for the terrorists as well.

For all these reasons, we have started the process of working out of new, stricter legal control regime that should take into account the current negative trends both on the global as well as the regional levels. The Draft law on transfers of weapons, dual-use goods and technologies, which will be in line with the EU standards, has been in the process of finalization.

- **NPT** – As the non-nuclear State Party to the NPT, my country fully respects all its obligations - it has never produced or otherwise obtained or used this type of WMD. Our activities are focused on the improvement of the control regime under the auspices of the IAEA. We are working on further enhancing of the security and safeguards of the radioactive materials used for peaceful purposes only, applying the highest international standards. With the assistance of the USA and the Russian Federation the radioactive material from the “Vinca” Nuclear Institute has been safely transferred to the Russian Federation, as the country of origin.

- **CTBT** – Serbia and Montenegro signed the CTBT on 8 July 2001. The internal legal ratification procedure has already been put into the necessary procedure before the Parliament.

- **BWC** – Serbia and Montenegro renewed its membership to the BWC in 2001. It fully complies with the Convention and supports all the efforts towards enhancement of the nonproliferation regime of the BW.

- **CWC** – Since joining the Convention in 2000, my country fully complies with all its provisions and maintains good cooperation with the OPCW in the Hague. This proved to be particularly important with regard to the conducting of the on-site inspections, in accordance with articles 5 and 6 of the Convention. The part of the equipment that once was used for military purposes, has been destroyed thanks to the international assistance. The OPCW verified its destruction.

We are currently in the process of consideration of participating in some other international initiatives aimed at suppressing the nonproliferation of the WMD.

- **MTCR** - On 26 February 2004 the Government adopted the declaration by which it took the obligation to a bona fide compliance and implementation of the provisions contained in the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) - updated Equipment, Software and Technology, of 30 May 2003, and the Guidelines for Sensitive Missile Relevant Transfers, of 7 January this year. It also accepted the Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation, initiated by the MTCR Member States in November 2002.

- **SALW** – Serbia and Montenegro has taken important steps towards suppressing illegal transfer of SALW. Coordinated actions of our security services resulted in suppression of illegal transfer, possession and use of the forbidden SALW. In cooperation with the international community (USA and NAMSA, in particular) and under the auspices of the Center for the control of SALW in the SEE (SEESAC), a large quantity of

about 100.000 pieces of different SALW, about 2,5 million pieces of munitions as well as about 1200 pieces of light rockets launchers (MANPADS) have already been destroyed in Serbia and Montenegro.

My country actively implements the UN Program of Action on illegal transfers of SALW and is the member of the UN Working group's Bureau for the commencement of negotiations on the international legally binding instrument on identification and tracing of the SALW.

- **CCW** As one of the highly affected country, my country supported and participated in the last year's negotiations that resulted in the Additional Protocol V on the ERW. We continue to support further discussions within the agreed mandate of the GGIH on the ERW and MOTAP, as well as other efforts with the aim to further enhancing and development of the international humanitarian law. To that end, we decided to accede to the Amended Protocol and the ratification is in process.

On 7 November 2003 the Declaration on acceptance of the amended article 1 of the CCW was deposited with the UN Secretary General and on February this year confirmed by the depositary.

On 12 August 2003 the UN Secretary General confirmed the acceptance of the ratification instruments of Serbia and Montenegro to the Additional protocol IV.

Madame President,

In closing I would like to focus on some activities within the internal domain that are undoubtedly have a wider impact.

It is important to mention that ever since the political changes in the country in 2000, we have started the process of comprehensive democratic reforms, including the reform of the military and security sector. We are working on the new defense strategy and military doctrine, in accordance with the new security environment both in the country and in the region. Those who once used to be our harsh enemies, in the new environment proved to be our unavoidable partners within our common efforts to build the new security structures for the better and safer future for all.

Further to this, it should be known that under the Constitutional Charter that regulates relations and share of the authority within the state union of Serbia and Montenegro, the internal mechanism for the implementation of the international obligations has been restructured. The new arrangement implies that the state union of Serbia and Montenegro is the legal subject of the international law, empowered to conclude the international agreements, yet its member states are entitled to their implementation. It implies that all decisions of the Council of Ministers and the Assembly of Serbia and Montenegro must be confirmed by the Governments and the Parliaments of the two Republics. According to that, all changes of the legislature and the

implementation of all measures and provisions demand the respective activities at the level of the two Republics.

At the very end I would like to point out our firm conviction that each of these measures and activities that we have been taking do have an important positive impact on the enhancing of the overall stability in our region. The real value of each and every of these measures should be judged from a specific angle, having in mind that this region has been for years burdened with protracted crisis, thus very favorable for all kind of illegal activities, including terrorist acts and all forms of organized crime. However difficult, we are determined to stay firmly on this path.

I thank you for your patience and kindly request, madam President, to have this statement officially circulated within the common practice of the CD.