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**Statement  
by H.E. Mr. Borys Tarasyuk,  
Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine  
at the meeting of the Conference on Disarmament**

Geneva, 15 March 2005

**Mr. President,  
Distinguished delegates,**

At the outset, I would like to congratulate you, Mr. Caughley, on your assumption of the chairmanship of this meeting.

I am convinced that the Conference on Disarmament will greatly benefit from your experience and diplomatic skills in the situation it faces.

**Mr. President,  
Distinguished delegates,**

Today I have the privilege to speak here, at this important international forum, on behalf of the new Government and the new President of Ukraine Viktor Yushchenko.

Nowadays Ukraine has been making strides toward building the civil society, a rule-of-law state and a market economy.

Ukraine is changing fundamentally but I wish to assure you that my country, whose contribution to the cause of strengthening the global peace and security can not be overestimated, will keep pursuing consistent policy in the field concerned.

Moreover, President Yushchenko and the Ukrainian Government will continue ensuring strict national compliance with respective international obligations.

**Mr. President,**

The international community continues to be challenged by the threats caused by the risk of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), their delivery means as well as by the illicit trafficking in, uncontrolled accumulation and a wide-spread use of certain conventional weapons.

The 9/11 events and continuous regional conflicts all over the globe have given an even greater sense of urgency to the intensification of the international efforts in the field of arms control and WMD non-proliferation regime with a view to enhancing collective security.

**Mr. President,**

The year 2004 proved to be another year of stalemate for the Conference on Disarmament, which was unable to effectively launch its work.

So far the beginning of 2005 has not been promising either. Ukraine deeply regrets this situation and is ready to spare no effort with a view to breaking the current impasse.

As an encouraging feature we can note your predecessor, Ambassador of the Netherlands Chris Sander's non-paper "Food for Thought on a CD Program of Work" and your strenuous efforts to move closer to the common approach of the CD Members on this very crucial task.

We do hope that this will give a renewed impetus to the Conference and that it will finally reach an agreement on its Program of Work and address all the substantive issues contained therein.

The immediate commencement of negotiations on the Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty (FMCT) as well as dealing with both nuclear disarmament and the prevention of an arms race in the outer space within appropriate subsidiary bodies - these three parts together constitute the basis today for an agreement to begin our work.

**Mr. President,**

Ukraine has repeatedly stated that the NPT is the cornerstone of the global non-proliferation regime and the essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament under Article VI of the Treaty. We continue to attach great importance to achieving the universality of and universal compliance with the NPT.

Last year marked the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary since Ukraine had acceded to the NPT and the START I Treaty had entered into force.

This fact is particularly worth reminding since Ukraine's landmark decision to forswear its nuclear capability - the world third largest nuclear arsenal - has been crucial for the progress in the nuclear disarmament process and for the global security as a whole.

In the run-up to the NPT Review Conference to be held this May I would like to stress that the Conference provides a great opportunity to fix grave problems facing the non-proliferation regime today as well as invigorate the nuclear disarmament process. And, we should not lose this opportunity.

Speaking of the need to close the loopholes in the nuclear non-proliferation regime, I wish to emphasize the importance of UN Security Council Resolution 1540 adopted last year. This instrument has marked a more active involvement of the United Nations in addressing a WMD non-proliferation problem. Resolution 1540 is, undoubtedly, vital to consolidating international efforts to enhance the global WMD non-proliferation regime.

**Mr. President,**

As concerns the chemical disarmament, I wish to underline that ensuring universality of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and the strict implementation of the Convention should remain our priorities in this field.

I wish also to inform that in October of this year Ukraine will host the second OPCW exercise on delivery of assistance (ASSISTEX-2) with the involvement of the NATO Euro Atlantic Disaster Coordination Committee.

**Mr. President,**

Ukraine is a firm supporter of practical efforts to ensure effective implementation of the UN Program of Action and the OSCE Document on small arms and light weapons (SALW).

Ukraine attaches great importance to the issue of the destruction of excessive stockpiles of SALW and related ammunitions.

Here I wish to draw your particular attention to one of the problems that is extremely acute in Ukraine.

I mean the destruction of thousand of tones of outdated ammunitions accumulated on the territory of Ukraine.

These stockpiles Ukraine inherited after the break-up of the Soviet Union when the soviet troops were being withdrawn from the Warsaw Pact countries leaving their surplus ammunition in Ukraine.

Nowadays we have been looking for the ways to cope with the said problem, including in the framework of the NATO/PfP Trust fund and the OSCE Document on conventional ammunitions.

The problem I am speaking about may have grave implications not only for Ukraine but also for the whole region. Ukraine, therefore, very much counts upon assistance of all interested states in the solution of this problem.

**Mr. President,**

Ukraine fully supports aspirations of the Ottawa-process initiators and like-minded states to overcome the humanitarian crisis caused by a large-scale proliferation and indiscriminate use of anti-personnel land-mines. In this regard I have the honor to inform you that the preparatory process in my country for the ratification of the Mine Ban Treaty has been completed.

**Mr. President,**

**Distinguished delegates,**

The Conference on Disarmament has a special place among existing international multilateral organizations and forums on the questions of international security and disarmament. Its considerable potential needs to be activated as soon as possible.

Ukraine pledges its strong support to you, Mr. President, and your successors with a view to bringing the Conference on Disarmament back to the leading role it is designed to play in this ever changing world.

Thank you.