



REPUBLIC OF BELARUS

PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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PRESS RELEASE

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Statement

by **Mr. Sergei Rachkov**
Deputy Permanent Representative
of the Republic of Belarus to the United Nations

at the 2007 Substantive Session of the United Nations
Disarmament Commission

10 April 2007, New York

Mr. Chairman,

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate you upon your election to the post of the Chairman of the 2007 substantive session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission. I extend my congratulations to the members of the Bureau too. You may rely on support and full cooperation of my delegation.

Belarus considers UNDC as the important deliberative body reporting to the General Assembly. Notwithstanding the difficulties which UNDC faced discussing all items of its agenda last year it is necessary to move forward. Further deliberations in an open and transparent manner at the current stage are a necessary prerequisite for reaching a success in the future.

At the Non-Aligned Movement Summit in Havana last fall Heads of States confirmed that the issues of nuclear disarmament are of a high priority. Efforts aimed at nuclear non-proliferation should be in parallel with the simultaneous efforts for nuclear disarmament and should not be in conflict with inalienable right of states for a peaceful use of nuclear energy. Being a member of Non-Aligned Movement Belarus shares the approach of the Movement to the disarmament and international security agenda and aligns itself with the statement made on behalf of NAM.

As a State party to Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, which voluntarily renounced an opportunity to continue to possess nuclear weapons before joining it, Belarus believes that it is important to maintain the integrity of the Treaty both in terms of promoting a balance between the obligations and responsibilities of Member-States and in terms of attaching equal importance to all key elements of the Treaty. In order to strengthen the NPT and to maintain the trust and commitments of Member-States it is necessary to

implement not only the Treaty itself but also agreements reached at the NPT Review Conferences in 1995 and 2000.

In 1999 UNDC developed guidelines for establishing nuclear weapon free zones. It is important to note in this regard that last year the Treaty on the Establishment of a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia has been signed. My delegation welcomes this step of our partners from Central Asia. We also support the relevant resolution of the General Assembly.

Belarus is convinced that it is necessary to provide legally binding assurances to Non-Nuclear States. We support efforts aimed at the elaboration of relevant norms of international law. At the same time, we welcome unilateral declarations made by nuclear states with respect to their policies of rejecting the use or the threat of use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear states.

We would like to express our hope for productive and focused discussion on the issue of confidence building measures in the field of conventional arms that will help to build upon the substantive document discussed by the Commission last year.

Belarus is convinced that a gradual movement from simple to more complex bilateral and multilateral measures and agreements will provide a good basis for preventing armed conflicts and strengthening national, regional and international security. CBMs by definition should be based on openness and true cooperation. This is the only possible way of discussing and successfully implementing these measures.

At the same time we share the view that CBMs are neither a substitute nor a precondition for the disarmament measures.

On its part the Republic of Belarus has been pursuing responsible and consistent policies in the field of conventional arms controls. Under the Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty Belarus destroyed nearly 10 per cent of all heavy military equipment destroyed under the provisions of CFE. Belarus was the first OSCE Member-State to have ratified the CFE Adaptation Agreement in 2000.

Belarus attaches a great importance to the elaboration of additional bilateral confidence-building measures on the basis of 1999 Vienna Document. Political arrangements on additional CBMs were reached with all neighbouring countries.

The Republic of Belarus fully shares international community's humanitarian concerns related to the illegal Small Arms and Light Weapons as well as landmine problems. Belarus continues its work aimed at elimination of around 3.7 million of PFM-I anti-personnel mines, including the cooperation with the European Union and other donors. The elimination of this kind of ammunition is the most problematic from the environmental viewpoint and requires cutting-edge technologies.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion would like to express a hope of my delegation for a fruitful and successful 2007 UNDC substantive session.