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в Женеве



Permanent Mission
of the Russian Federation
to the United Nations Office
and other International
Organizations in Geneva

STATEMENT

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at the Second Session
of the Preparatory Committee
for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties
to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
(Cluster 1: nuclear disarmament)

Geneva, April 26, 2018

Mr. Chairman,

Colleagues,

The issues of nuclear disarmament are high on the agenda of the NPT review process.

Our country is committed to building a world free of nuclear weapons. Russia has already made an unprecedented contribution to nuclear disarmament by having decreased its nuclear arsenal by more than 85%.

Russia has fully complied with its commitment to reduce strategic offensive weapons in accordance with the New START Treaty between Russia and the US. Russia's aggregate potential of strategic arms is even below the limits for warheads and delivery means established by the Treaty.

Unfortunately, we cannot confirm that the other Party to the Treaty has also reached the set limits. The figures declared by the US have been reached not only by actually reducing the arms, but also through manipulations that are incorrect from the point of view of the Treaty. Specifically Washington has unilaterally removed from the accountability under the Treaty 56 Trident II SLBM launchers and 41 B-52H heavy bombers by declaring them as converted. However, the so-called conversion has been conducted in such a way that Russia cannot confirm its results as it is specified in the New START Treaty. Moreover, the US has not included into the accountability under the Treaty several ICBM 'silo training launchers' by renaming them in 'training silos'. Such deviation is also not allowed by the Treaty.

Thus, there is a serious anomaly that needs to be eliminated. Otherwise, a threat to the viability of the Treaty will persist. The work on that issue will continue within the Bilateral Consultative Commission under the New START Treaty. We will seek to ensure strict implementation of the New START Treaty by the US side.

The Treaty itself continues to operate and contributes to predictability and stability of our strategic relations with the US. Russia remains strongly committed to the New START Treaty.

We reaffirm our commitment to the INF Treaty. We share the concerns voiced by a number of states regarding the future of the Treaty. However, it seems that only few of them know the real state of play. The U.S. continues to reproduce its unsubstantiated allegations. While the fact that the US has been severely violating for many years the INF Treaty and trying to justify its intention to destroy it by shifting responsibility on Russia is being silenced. We would like to believe that chances to save the INF Treaty are still there and the U.S. will be strong enough to show political will needed.

Mr. Chairman,

The Russian Federation has unilaterally implemented a whole number of other significant measures. In particular, we have decreased fourfold the number of our non-strategic nuclear weapons. All such remaining arms were converted into non-deployed and were concentrated exclusively within the national territory at

centralized storage bases, where the strictest regime of control and security is ensured. Another step in that area has been our national decision to de-target Russian nuclear weapons that now have a so-called zero flight assignment.

The role of nuclear weapons in Russia's Military Doctrine has been seriously reduced. Their possible use is limited only to following extraordinary circumstances: the use of WMD against Russia or its allies and a hypothetical situation when aggression against our country threatens the very existence of the State. In other words, these are provisions of a purely defensive nature. A concept of "non-nuclear deterrence" was also included in Russia's Military Doctrine.

Mr. Chairman,

Colleagues,

We believe that further progress in nuclear disarmament is possible only if necessary efforts are made by all the interested states. Steps in that area should strengthen and not undermine international security and stability. The realistic approach to nuclear disarmament, based on the NPT, entails phase-by-phase approach and mandatory engagement of all states with military nuclear capabilities. That's why it is impossible for Russia to support the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. This document controversial by nature has not been agreed with us. We respect the views of those who have put forward this initiative. At the same time, it is obvious that the Treaty which has been developed without participation of nuclear states or without taking into account their views cannot make any positive contribution to the reduction or limitation of nuclear weapons. It is based on the false premise that nuclear disarmament can be carried out without taking into account strategic realities. The text of the Treaty has been prepared in a hasty manner, on a non-consensus basis and without taking into account the fundamental principles of the NPT.

The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons has not yet entered into force but the work on it has already provoked a sense of hostility and discord within the global community. These tendencies continue to deepen. Further advancement of the Treaty threatens to undermine long-term efforts aimed at real nuclear disarmament. The Treaty can cause irreparable damage to the integrity and sustainability of the established nuclear non-proliferation system based on the NPT. The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons can undermine efforts to ensure the entering into force of the CTBT.

Raising the issue of complete prohibition of nuclear weapons in a short timeframe would be appropriate at the final stage of the nuclear disarmament process to assure the irreversibility of the results achieved. Today it only distracts attention from the utterly unacceptable global security situation with accumulation of serious and much more relevant problems. Let us mention just some of them. They include unrestricted deployment of global missile defence systems, development of non-nuclear high-precision strategic offensive weapons, prospects of placement of strike weapons in outer space, growing quality and quantity imbalances in the field of conventional arms, worsening prospects for the CTBT.

Particular attention needs to be paid to destabilizing efforts of certain countries who seem to believe that ensuring their own security does not require taking into account considerations of other states on that matter. Active steps need to be taken to counter attempts to destabilize the disarmament architecture and undermine the authority of international organizations and regimes established with the approval of almost entire global community.

In this context there are serious concerns about development in some countries of doctrinal documents envisaging significant increase of the role of nuclear weapons in military planning and lowering the threshold for its use. Another source of concern is the continuing NATO practice of nuclear sharing when non-nuclear states practice handling nuclear weapons in direct violation of the NPT provisions. All of that increases the risk of a nuclear conflict with all the catastrophic consequences.

In order to avoid the most dangerous scenarios in a situation of serious escalation of global military and political tensions and preserve strategic balance, we had to take military and technical measures announced by the President of the Russian Federation on March 1st, 2018 in his Address to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation. We emphasize that all steps to strengthen the defence capabilities of our country are strictly in line with the existing arms control treaties. We do not threaten anyone and do not intend to use our potential for any aggressive purposes.

To stress once again, this is a matter of ensuring our security and preserve the balance. At the same time Russia's President called to sit at the negotiations table and think on the renewed and perspective international security system.

History teaches us that attempts to strengthen one's own security at the expense of the security of others are doomed to fail. A conversation is needed in which the notions of equality, mutual respect and consensus are of instrumental rather than declarative nature. This is the only approach that helps find a balance of interests satisfactory for everyone and ensure due consideration of key issues of global security, as well as create conditions for advancement towards nuclear disarmament. We are ready for such conversation.