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в Нью-Йорке



Permanent Mission
of the Russian Federation
to the United Nations
in New York

STATEMENT

BY DELEGATION OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

**at the Third Session of the Preparatory Committee
for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties
to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
on the Issues of Nuclear Disarmament (Cluster 1)**

New York, May 2, 2019

Mr. Chairman,

Dear Colleagues,

This session is being held against the background of a significant increase in trends that have a negative impact on international security and stability. Crisis phenomena are literally piling up, including in the area of arms control, namely with regard to nuclear and missile armaments. This poses a serious challenge to the international community and cannot but affect the situation around the NPT.

Matters of nuclear disarmament undoubtedly remain one of the central issues on the agenda of the review cycle. Russia's practical contribution to nuclear disarmament is well known: by implementing a number of agreements, Russia's nuclear arsenal has been reduced by more than 85% compared to the peak of the Cold War. All of our relevant treaty obligations have been fully met. By this we mean, first of all, the 1991 Treaty on the Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (START I), the 2002 Moscow Treaty on Strategic Offensive Reductions, as well as the Treaty between the U.S. and Russia on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms, signed in Prague on April 8, 2010. Alongside, Russia's total strategic arms capabilities remain even below the 2010 New START Treaty ceilings for delivery systems and warheads.

We should particularly mention the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles (INF Treaty), which became the first agreement providing for destruction of nuclear weapons, and was in full implemented with regard to the two corresponding classes of missile systems. We note with regret that later - specifically starting from 1999 - the U.S. took the path of violating the INF Treaty. And on February 5, 2019, under false pretexts, Washington decided to withdraw from the Treaty and, having mobilized the support of its NATO allies, launched the relevant procedure. At the same time, the American side suspended the implementation of its obligations under the Treaty and announced its intention to intensify the development of weapons prohibited by the Treaty. The realistic measures we proposed to settle the Parties' counterclaims on the basis of mutual transparency were rejected by Washington, effectively

curtailing our dialogue. Thus, there are clear indications that one of the key disarmament agreements will cease to have effect already this August. We think that this is the most serious mistake and the responsibility for it should be shared with the U.S. by the supporting NATO countries.

Against this background, Russia has taken the necessary steps to ensure predictability in this area. Particularly, we have declared a unilateral moratorium on the deployment of future intermediate-range and shorter-range ground-based missiles until U.S. missile systems of similar classes begin to appear in the respective regions.

We note with concern the continuing ambiguity regarding the New START Treaty, which expires in less than two years. We have repeatedly stressed our support for its extension. Among other things, this would allow to buy time to discuss further prospects for nuclear weapons reduction. But first, we should resolve the problem of Washington's unilateral removal from accountability under the New START Treaty of a large number of its strategic delivery systems, allegedly converted, which status we are unable to confirm. This is a very serious problem which is, however, quite possible to resolve. Everything depends on whether the U.S. is ready to exercise enough political will and meet its obligations under the Treaty in good faith.

As for further progress towards nuclear weapons reductions in accordance with the obligations under Article VI of the NPT, our consistent position in this regard is based on the principles of realism and pragmatism. Let me recall the key elements of this position.

The process of reducing and limiting nuclear weapons should be based on a step by step approach and the principle of equal and indivisible security. Alongside with that, it cannot be conducted in isolation from realities and without establishing prerequisites contributing to gradual steps towards the ultimate goal of a world free of nuclear weapons. In particular, it is necessary to consider a set of factors that have negative impact on strategic stability and include unilateral and unlimited development of the global missile defense system; increasingly real prospects of

deployment of weapons in space; quantitative and qualitative imbalances in the area of conventional arms; implementation of the concept involving defeat of strategic targets by employment of "prompt global strikes" with long-range high-precision non-nuclear arms.

It is necessary to resist attempts to destabilize the disarmament architecture and to avoid undermining the authority of international organizations. Unacceptable are the attempts to weaken the defense potential of other countries by illegitimate methods of unilateral pressure through sanctions bypassing the UN Security Council.

Moreover, the time has come to start working towards multilateralization of the process of nuclear disarmament. At the same time, the Russian Federation does not intend to impose anything on anyone. We believe that this issue requires action on the basis of consensus, while taking into account the interests of all participants.

Further nuclear disarmament is also hindered by the continued presence of U.S. non-strategic nuclear weapons in Europe and the ongoing notorious practice of "nuclear sharing " within the framework of NATO involving the preparation of military personnel of non-nuclear countries for possible use of the U.S. nuclear weapons. That is a flagrant violation of the NPT, to which Russia constantly draws attention of the international community. We also note that non-nuclear States allowing the deployment of the U.S. nuclear weapons on their territories violate IAEA safeguards agreements.

Mr. Chairman,

Without resolving the above-mentioned problems on the basis of the principle of equal and indivisible security, it is hardly possible to discuss in a meaningful way further practical steps in the field of nuclear disarmament. Together, we all have yet to determine ways to move forward in this area on the basis of the NPT.

That is why we believe it is premature right now to talk about multilateral verification of nuclear disarmament. Without a clear understanding of specific disarmament steps, it is pointless to talk about ways of their verification out of the

necessary context. We are also not ready to support the efforts of some States to immediately ban nuclear weapons. We respect their position and understand motivations behind it. At the same time, we consider the elaboration of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons to be a mistake. This initiative does not contribute to nuclear disarmament, undermines the NPT and provokes growing contradictions among its Parties.

Russia's position on nuclear disarmament is comprehensively set out in the working paper circulated at this session.

In general, constructive and result-oriented interaction on nuclear disarmament issues is impossible without respect for security concerns of the participants in such a process and without strict observance of the consensus rule, which guarantees a balance of interests, especially in the current difficult situation with regard to international security and stability.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.