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STATEMENT

by the 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
(Cluster 2: Non-Proliferation and IAEA Safeguards)**

New York, May 3, 2019

Mr. Chairman,

Effective functioning of the nuclear non-proliferation regime is key to maintaining international peace and stability. For more than half a century, the NPT has been a solid foundation of this regime. Despite the challenges that arise from time to time in the area of nuclear non-proliferation, the Treaty continues to effectively fulfil its purpose. Talks about some NPT crisis, or the decline of the NPT era are absolutely inappropriate. There is no alternative that could create an equally effective barrier to the proliferation risks.

The IAEA safeguards system is an essential tool for monitoring States compliance with the NPT obligations. The Russian Federation supports the Agency's efforts aimed at ensuring the sustainability and increasing the effectiveness of the verification mechanism. We are making material and expert contributions to this work, including by means of the national safeguards support programme.

We believe that objectivity, technical credibility, as well as conformity with the safeguards agreements concluded between the States and the IAEA should remain the basic principles of the IAEA safeguards system. Presumption of innocence is a legitimate right of all States Parties to the NPT, and the IAEA must consider that right. In its conclusions, the IAEA is obligated to rely only on such information the credibility of which the Secretariat would be ready to defend in an open discussion in the Board of Governors, supporting it with objective data. There is no room for subjective factors, political bias and unsubstantiated assumptions when conducting inspections and drawing conclusions on safeguards. Derogation from these principles would inevitably undermine confidence of States Parties to the NPT in the IAEA safeguards system and would lead to the erosion of the nuclear non-proliferation regime as a whole.

We insist that any changes to the IAEA safeguards system should be implemented in such a way so as to make the specifics of application of new approaches understandable to all Member States of the Agency and backed by their unanimous support. Such changes are subject to mandatory approval by the Agency's decision-making bodies.

Mr. Chairman,

IAEA Safeguards Implementation Reports confirm the absence of explicit threats to the nuclear non-proliferation regime. Nevertheless, in undertaking a major overhaul of its verification mechanisms, the Secretariat has, willingly or unwillingly, left aside major problems that needed to be adequately addressed long ago. One of such long-overdue issues remains the stationing of US nuclear weapons on the territory of a number of European countries, as well as the so-called NATO nuclear sharing missions. Interestingly enough, year after year all these European countries receive an IAEA broader conclusion that all nuclear material on its territory is used exclusively in peaceful activities. Some peaceful activities, I should say!

IAEA General Conference 62nd session consensus resolution on safeguards requested the IAEA Director General to submit to the Board of Governors timely reports with a comprehensive analysis of the ongoing reform, taking into account all the issues and problems raised by Member States. We expect this report to be published as soon as possible. Without detailed information on the status of the implementation of "State-Level approaches", it would be difficult for other States to adapt their safeguards system to the new rules, understand how new approaches to safeguards application could work within the framework of the safeguards agreements they have signed, what the main changes are, and what would be the IAEA requirements for them. This is particularly important for those countries that have not yet signed or applied the Additional Protocol to the Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement.

Information previously provided by the Secretariat suggests that for States with a developed nuclear fuel cycle, which, in fact, should be the focus of the IAEA safeguards activities, verification efforts have been reduced. Such gaps cause particular concern because we are talking about States which account for almost three fourth's of safeguarded nuclear material and facilities. Another legitimate cause for concern is the appearance in the IAEA practice of a new category of countries where the need for verification is recognized by the Agency as limited. This does not correlate with NPT's

Article III, and needs to be clarified.

Mr. Chairman,

Conclusion of a comprehensive settlement around the Iranian nuclear programme in 2015 was a vivid demonstration of the effectiveness of the NPT. The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) set an example of skillful international diplomacy based on common goals, unified political will and a mutual focus on results. We would like to remind that Iran has never violated the NPT. Relying on this Treaty allowed to find diplomatic and political keys to resolving the situation which certain countries have been carefully mounting up into a problem. The JCPOA helped to promptly settle all the remaining questions with regard to Tehran.

We commend Iran's patience, while Teheran continues to strictly comply with the JCPOA. Its engagement with the IAEA is unprecedented. It is at a levels that many of the hardcore critics of the nuclear deal cannot boast.

Nevertheless, the implementation of the JCPOA faces increasingly serious challenges, provoked by violations of this arrangement by one of its lead architects and co-authors – the United States.

Last year Russia and China produced a working paper in support of the JCPOA, which enjoyed considerable appreciation among the States Parties to the NPT. European countries and other US allies were afraid to join our initiative. At the time, they to somehow tried to appease Washington, that went outrageous. The sad results of such attempts are well-known.

US renunciation of its obligations under the JCPOA, and its demonstrative violation of the UN Security Council Resolution 2231, as well as Article 25 of the UN Charter are dictated by considerations that are far from non-proliferation. The US does not hide that its objective is to break the current Iranian state, change power in a sovereign country, and put any international cooperation with Tehran under its sole control. The fact that the US is trying to manipulate the requirements of non-proliferation in justifying its anti-Iranian course only reinforces this concern.

The persistent desire of the US to complicate further implementation of the JCPOA after it decided to withdraw from it also deserves strong condemnation. Threats to apply sanctions against the UN, the IAEA and their Member States for their support and their compliance with the decisions on the implementation of the JCPOA are illegal and unacceptable. We urge the United States to reconsider their behavior and return to its international obligations.

We would particularly like to stress the counterproductive nature of the attempts to impose any additional obligations on Tehran, that were not agreed upon within the JCPOA, as well as attempts to restart the discussion on issues that have already been closed by the IAEA, including the so-called possible military dimensions of the former Iranian nuclear program.

The implementation of the JCPOA has demonstrated that all emerging questions that the IAEA could address to Iran are effectively resolved within the framework of the Additional Protocol to the Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement, with the principal condition that the Agency's requests are properly justified, and the object of inspection is nuclear material and current activities related to it. We are convinced that the Additional Protocol cannot and should not be used to verify the correctness of someone's intelligence data or material of dubious origin. Don't forget that the Additional Protocol is implemented in Iran on a voluntary basis, and we must do everything to ensure that it continues to work. We should not force Iran out of the JCPOA.

Russia, together with its partners within the JCPOA and other interested countries, continues to support the preservation and sustainable implementation of the Plan of Action. We call upon all States to adopt a similar approach, as required by UNSC Resolution 2231.

In an attempt to somehow obscure its destructive approach towards the NPT, the United States does not shun the use of absolutely "dirty" techniques, detached from reality. After more than ten years, the Americans suddenly begin to spin the story around a destroyed facility in the vicinity of the Syrian Dair el-Zor. We advise our American

colleagues to familiarize themselves with the IAEA conclusions on Damascus's implementation of its non-proliferation obligations – the Agency regularly confirms that the Syrians fully comply with their safeguards agreement in connection with the NPT. Every claim made against Damascus is based on the infamous approach of highly/very likely, unfounded allegations and vague judgments, which will not be seriously considered as real evidence. The now trivial US practice of using the NPT Review Process to settle political scores with its opponents is clearly not conducive to strengthening the non-proliferation regime. Otherwise, Washington should seek clarification from those who bombed the facility near the Syrian Dair el-Zor.

We fully support international efforts to resolve the Korean Peninsula nuclear issue. There is no alternative to political and diplomatic methods of solving this problem. We believe that a full-fledged launch of the process of the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula is possible only in case of significant progress on the political "front" and will primarily depend on the efforts of regional states.

We are convinced that the dismantling of the DPRK's military nuclear program must be carried out in such a way so as to avoid any leaks of sensitive information related to nuclear weapons. This process should be carried out under the supervision of experts of P5 States. The IAEA, on the other hand, has a central role to play in ensuring that the nuclear material derived from the military programme is properly safeguarded. The Russian side fully supports the Agency's efforts in maintaining its operational readiness to resume the verification activities in the DPRK. The Agency's careful, depoliticized and technically sound assessment of Pyongyang's nuclear program would be particularly important in the absence of IAEA physical access to North Korean nuclear facilities.

The process of denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula will take a long time and will require maximum patience and endurance from all participants. It must be supported by real practical steps towards each other and in a phased manner using compromise-based approaches, with an emphasis on creating an atmosphere of trust.

This is what the President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin said after the talks with the Chairman of the State Affairs Commission of the DPRK Kim Jong-Un in Vladivostok on April 25. All states involved need to work together and develop multilateral mechanisms for addressing the existing security issues. We are conducting such work with our colleagues and are developing together with them a plan of action to accelerate the establishment of a lasting peace in the subregion and its denuclearization. By the way, international organizations and formats such as the UN and IAEA play an important role in these efforts.

Once the relevant procedures for denuclearization are completed, we believe it necessary to return the DPRK into the framework of the NPT coupled by the confirmation of the right of Pyongyang to develop a peaceful nuclear program.

Mr. Chairman,

Nuclear-weapon-free zones (NWFZs) have an important place in the nuclear non-proliferation regime. We support their creation. Russia has ratified and strictly fulfils its obligations under all the protocols it has signed on negative security assurances to the NWFZ treaties. We call on the United States, which has not yet ratified the protocols to the Treaties of Rarotonga, Pelindaba and Semipalatinsk, to do so immediately.

In response to the alleged accusations that were expressed yesterday by France of Russia's unconstructive position on the Protocol to the Bangkok Treaty I would like to underline that Russia finalized all its domestic procedures in 2012 and is ready right now in this room together with other P5 States to sign the above mentioned Protocol.

Mr. Chairman,

The CTBT is central to international efforts to strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation regime. The Treaty is the patrimony of all parties and is intended to serve the benefit of all mankind. It should not be held hostage to the ill-considered decisions of individual countries. Unfortunately, this is exactly the situation we are witnessing today with regard to the CTBT. For the first time, a state from the Annex 2 to the Treaty, whose ratification is necessary for its entry into force, has officially declared that it does

not intend to ratify the CTBT, either now or in the long term. This step of the US administration was not unexpected, given the history of the constantly declared inability to ratify the Treaty for the past two decades.

Russia, which ratified the Treaty in 2000 and strictly adheres to its obligations, is seriously concerned about this situation around the CTBT. We would like to stress the unacceptability of attempts to replace the efforts aimed at the entry into force of the Treaty by building the capacity of its verification mechanism. We will not allow any attempts to legalize the "provisional application" of the Treaty bypassing its Article XIV. Full and effective functioning of the CTBT verification mechanism is possible only after the Treaty becomes a functioning international legal mechanism. The Russian assessments of the situation around the CTBT are presented in the working paper distributed at this session.

Mr. Chairman,

We are still convinced that only a systematic approach to issues of nuclear nonproliferation and strengthening the NPT regime as a whole will allow to grasp the task of preventing the nuclear threat.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.