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STATEMENT

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**Acting Head of the Delegation of the Russian Federation
at the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty
on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
(Cluster 1: nuclear disarmament)**

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Nuclear disarmament along with nuclear non-proliferation and peaceful use of nuclear energy is one of the three pillars and main elements of the NPT. The Russian Federation does its utmost to fulfill its relevant obligations under the Treaty. This can be proved by the significant results we have achieved. In particular, the nuclear arms race was not only stopped in accordance with Article VI of the NPT, but also reversed long ago. The Russian nuclear arsenal was reduced to its level of the late 50s – early 60s, i.e. before the full-scale arms race.

The real reduction of nuclear weapons began on December 8, 1987 after signing the US-USSR Treaty on the Elimination of the Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles. In accordance with this Treaty, two classes of nuclear weapons were irreversibly eliminated, 1,846 ground-launched ballistic and cruise missiles and 825 launchers of such missiles were fully destroyed within the shortest possible period of time. In all, over 3,000 nuclear warheads with a total yield of over 500,000 kilotons have been deactivated. This was followed by the Treaty on Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms, the 2002 Moscow Treaty on Strategic Offensive Reductions and, finally, the 2010 Treaty on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms.

In pursuance of these agreements, the Russian Federation reduced its strategic offensive arms fivefold in the past 20 years. Only 20% of those arsenals that we had at the peak of the cold war is left. Besides, we reduced our tactical nuclear weapons arsenals fourfold.

Let us present some more up-to-date figures reflecting the dynamics of nuclear arsenals reduction in the past ten years in relation to the NPT Review Conferences. When the Seventh Review Conference convened in 2005 we had 4,732 deployed warheads. By the Eighth Review Conference held five years later this figure shrunk to 3,900 deployed warheads. Now, there are 1,582

deployed warheads left, i.e. the number of deployed warheads in the last decade was cut threefold. The number of reduced deployed delivery vehicles is impressive as well: at the Eighth Review Conference held in 2010, we reported to have had 800 units whereas now we have only 515 units left.

In this context, it is quite strange to sometimes hear the claims that nothing is allegedly being done in the area of nuclear disarmament or that it is in almost complete stagnation. Such claims, frankly speaking, bear no relation to the truth and apparently can be explained either by lack of information or by a polemic fervor, when objective assessments are replaced by emotions.

The nuclear arsenals reduction under the New START Treaty of 2010 still continues. By February 5, 2018, the Russian Federation and the United States will have to reduce their respective numbers of delivery vehicles and warheads to the stipulated levels.

Naturally, the question arises: what is next? It cannot be answered now, first and foremost due to the current uncertainty in the international arena. In the framework of the NPT, its States Parties repeatedly confirmed that the nuclear disarmament should be carried out under conditions of strategic stability and equal security for all. However, the situation here is deteriorating. Negative factors that affect strategic stability are gaining strength.

This is related mainly to the unilateral implementation of the global ABM system plans which, in current conditions, is an attempt to secure a military advantage at the expense and to the detriment of other States. The Prompt Global Strike program and the failure to develop arrangements to prevent the deployment of weapons in outer space have an extremely negative impact. The fact that the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty has not come into force since its conclusion almost 20 years ago also affects modern international relations. By the way, the Russian Federation ratified this Treaty in 2000.

Grave imbalances in conventional weapons in the European continent do not facilitate further steps in the nuclear missiles field as well. The Treaty on

Conventional Armed Forces in Europe concluded in 1990 has become history, and a possible new agreement that could replace it and correspond to new realities is still just an intention. The negotiations on this agreement have not even started.

During his speech in front of the participants of Valdai Forum in Sochi in October 2014, Russian President Vladimir Putin underscored our commitment to nuclear disarmament. We expect that this objective will be treated seriously and without any double standards. It means we should take into consideration all factors that influence strategic stability and create necessary conditions for further advance in this direction.

It must be taken into account that, with the conclusion of the New START Treaty in 2010, our country has virtually exhausted the possibilities to reduce our nuclear arsenal on a bilateral basis with the USA. Further steps in this direction can only be made with the involvement of all states possessing military nuclear capabilities.

We share the goal to ultimately achieve the global "nuclear zero". But the question arises of how a relevant agreement should be formalized over time. In this context, the need to develop a nuclear weapons convention is usually mentioned. However, there is also an alternative, which is particularly appropriate to recall here, at the NPT Review Conference. In accordance with the penultimate paragraph of the Preamble and with Article VI of the Treaty, the total elimination of nuclear arsenals should take place in compliance with the Treaty on General and Complete Disarmament. These provisions were somehow almost forgotten in the last decades, but they are actually an international obligation for all the States Parties to the NPT. There is something to think about.

Madam President,

We would like to emphasize that Russia regards with great attention and respect the efforts of States to ensure rapid progress in nuclear disarmament and

to eliminate the danger of a nuclear war. We take multidimensional concrete steps in this direction, which are appropriate to recall when considering the disarmament provisions of the NPT. For example, all the tactical nuclear weapons in Russia remaining after a fourfold reduction were transferred into the non-deployed category. We have thus actually implemented the measures to de-alert such weapons on an unprecedented scale. They are located exclusively within the national territory and concentrated at centralized storage bases, where a high-level security regime is assured, preventing theft or any unauthorized use.

In addition, the Russian Federation does not deploy nuclear weapons outside its national territory and does not transfer control of its nuclear weapons to other states directly or indirectly.

We believe that the removal of non-strategic nuclear weapons by other countries to their territories, the elimination of all infrastructure abroad providing for the rapid deployment of non-strategic nuclear weapons and the completion of preparation for their use with the involvement of non-nuclear states would contribute to strengthening international security and further reducing and limiting nuclear arsenals.

The de-targeting of Russian nuclear weapons that have a so-called "zero flight mission" can serve as another example of de-alerting.

During the UN General Assembly sessions and NPT event, considerable attention is given to the decrease of the role and significance of nuclear weapons in military doctrines of nuclear-weapon States. These appeals are taken into account in the Russian military doctrine, according to which the hypothetical possibility of the use of nuclear weapons is limited to two exceptional cases: the use of weapons of mass destruction against Russia or its allies and in case when the very existence of the State is under threat. In other words, they are purely defensive provisions. Moreover, a new concept of "non-nuclear deterrence" appeared in the latest edition of the military doctrine, which

objectively means a further reduction of the role and significance of nuclear weapons in Russian doctrinal directives.

In addition, we would like to recall that, about a quarter of a century ago, Russia unilaterally imposed a voluntary moratorium on the production of fissile material used for creating nuclear weapons, which fully remains in force.

In conclusion, let me reaffirm our commitment to further work towards the reduction of nuclear arsenals, certainly, taking into account the development of strategic environment and the evolution of all factors affect strategic stability. We believe that the dynamics of gradual nuclear disarmament should be in line with the pace of construction of an effective system of global and regional security, as well as with the increased mutual confidence between States. We call on all the States Parties to the NPT to focus on solving these truly priority tasks towards early achievement of the nuclear disarmament goals set by the Treaty.

Thank you for your attention.