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## ***Meeting of the SuPR (Sustainable Partnership with Russia) Group***

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### **The NPT on Dawn of a New Review Cycle – Out To Move Forward In Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament, a View from Switzerland**

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Since 2007, Gstaad has been the venue of successful round-tables dealing with security issues and relations between Russia, the US and Europe. I'm proud that the Swiss Department of Foreign Affairs took an active role in facilitating these meetings. I do hope that our cooperation will continue in the future. Today's meeting of the Sustainable Partnership with Russia Group, as you said the SuPR or *super* group, has addressed the issues of US-Russia nuclear arms reduction as well as the Middle East nuclear issue. Both of them are part of the most pressing and challenging current issues in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. That is why, I deeply enjoy my colleague Jean-Daniel who was able to attend your discussions and I'm sure that he will be briefing me correctly tomorrow because he is still keeping the most important thing.

As I said the 2 topics on your agenda are part of the most pressing issues. Indeed they involve the key actors in the field of nuclear disarmament. As everybody in this room is fully aware of, the issue of US-Russian nuclear disarmament went through remarkable developments in the recent months, with the ratification of the new START. And I heard that they will exchange the documents in Munich. And the second item, the nuclear issue in the Middle East has to deal with one of the most sensitive regions in the world. It has also gone through remarkable development with unanimous adoption of the last NPT Review Conference of the so-called practical steps, at least at the level of resolutions in words. We all are looking to see how this conference could be organized and come to successful results.

These two issues are also very attractive because so far, nobody knows exactly how they will evolve in the near future. Will the US and Russia launch a new process to further reduce their remaining nuclear arsenal? Will other nuclear powers join such a process? Will the 2012 Conference on the WMD free zone in the Middle East take place? Or will that region go through developments that will make the holding of that conference impossible? I'm not only thinking of possible developments on the Iranian nuclear issue but also on the current democratic awakening in several states of the Arab world, as I think we are witnessing these days these developments?

But let's come back to our nuclear issues. As a loyal civil servant, I feel compelled to offer you as a starter, or as a second starter, some of the elements of my country's position on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. I would entitle my presentation as follows: the NPT on the dawn of a new review cycle out to move forward in nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, a view from Switzerland. I heard when I came to your meeting this afternoon, that you were asking yourselves about the goals of your meeting. Whether it's worth carrying on or not. As a representative of the have-nots of nuclear weapons and all these weapons you are talking about, I can tell you we are not going to shut up. So I can only encourage you because, like a war that should be left in the hands of the generals, the civilians should also talk about war and peace. And I think that the academics and all the people maybe not directly in common should also talk about it and keep the issue on the table. Otherwise, if we are not talking about this, we will leave all these issues to those who would prefer to have these kind of issues falling down on the floor and that nobody would talk about. I think we have to keep the pressure on, all together, the haves and especially the have-nots.

First of all I would like to make 3 remarks. First, as a provocative assertion, I would say that concrete developments in the field of nuclear disarmament will take place outside the NPT framework. I mean that the ball is not in our court, but in that of the two more heavily armed nuclear weapons states: the U.S. and Russia. In this context Switzerland welcomes the ratification of the new START, as I said, and hopes that a new round of negotiations to further reduce nuclear arsenals will be rapidly launched, before the new START is bearing roots. Switzerland also hopes that the new round will cover all types of weapons, both strategic and non strategic, both deployed and not deployed. This morning, I've been told the idea of a pause in the disarmament process was mentioned among you. As a non nuclear weapon state which has met its commitments for more than 40 years, it would be quite difficult for Switzerland to understand that you need a pause. So no pause please.

Second, Switzerland is of the view that we cannot expect full engagement in the disarmament process before the stakeholders are convinced that nuclear weapons are not appropriate to meet the real current security challenges. Today, these challenges are terrorism, organized crime, migration, misuse of information technology, financial market instability or climate change. This morning, I've been told again that you had difficulties elaborating concrete scenarios involving nuclear weapons except the one of deterrence. For a non-nuclear weapon state like Switzerland, it is therefore quite difficult to understand your rationale in keeping such a huge quantity of nuclear weapons in your arsenal. So don't be afraid to be more ambitious in your plans for disarmament.

Nuclear weapons constitute an existential threat to the world itself. Their very existence makes them attractive to proliferators, whether state or non-state actors. As a consequence, nuclear weapons increase instability rather than stability. Third, credible long term security policies must be based on universal, non-discriminatory, legally-binding instruments. With nuclear weapons as well as with the nuclear supplier group exception for India, we are instead in the haves and have-no approach. Ultimately, the question of banning nuclear weapons by a new convention as proposed by the UN Secretary General must be addressed. Switzerland supports the objective of achieving a world without nuclear weapons and encourages the discussion of such a convention. Indeed, Switzerland is of the idea that the use of nuclear weapons cannot be reconciled

with the respect of international humanitarian law. Any use of these weapons, willfully or accidentally, will have catastrophic humanitarian consequences. This fact has been recognized by the 2010 NPT Review Conference. Switzerland, as the depositary of the Geneva Conventions, feels a special responsibility in this respect and will continue to promote the humanitarian perspective in nuclear disarmament.

Since the vision of a world without nuclear weapons may not come true in the short term, not in our lifetime, what can a country like mine do to help such a vision become reality? As you know, in recent years, my country has embarked on specific topics a intermediate steps toward disarmament. With some other countries, Switzerland has made proposal to reduce the alert levels of nuclear weapon and has sponsored a UN general assembly resolution on de-alerting nuclear weapons. We will continue to be active on this issue. I also think that the recent Dotnet war has opened the door to a new area cyberwar and has probably increase the urgency of the de-alerting issue. Switzerland is also working on how to implement irreversibility in nuclear disarmament, including the dimension of qualitative disarmament. This means no technical upgrading of nuclear arsenals and a reduced role of nuclear weapons in nuclear doctrines.

Dear friends, ladies and gentlemen, let me conclude by saying that nuclear disarmament is not a matter of idealism. It is a matter of reason and responsibility. It is not an illusion either. The illusion is to believe that one can continue to ensure our common security with such weapons and prevent their proliferation. Nuclear disarmament is also a matter of creativity. As I said in September last year, I was quoting Einstein, «we can't solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them». I am convinced that the Gstaad spirit has facilitated such creativity and if not this time, then it will happen next time.