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STATEMENT

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Head of the Delegation of the Russian Federation
to the Preparatory Committee
for the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty
on the Nuclear Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

(Cluster 1: disarmament)

New York, 28 April – 9 May 2014

Mr. Chairman,

Russia believes that saving the world from the threats engendered by WMDs is one of the main ways of strengthening the strategic stability and international security. We are committed to a comprehensive strategy that implies reducing and limiting nuclear arsenals while ensuring equal and indivisible security for all states without exception with due account for the whole range of factors affecting the strategic stability. This is the approach to nuclear disarmament that was recorded in the Action Plan adopted at the 2010 NPT Review Conference. We are actively working on its implementation, including in the P5 format. Its regular conference has been recently held in Beijing where a lot of attention was given to the interaction of the nuclear powers in implementing the Action Plan. The conference successfully ended the cycle of such events that are held by turns by Great Britain, France, the USA, Russia and China.

Mr. Chairman,

Russia's practical contribution to nuclear disarmament is well-known and speaks for itself.

In accordance with the US-USSR Treaty on the Elimination of the Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles (INF Treaty) signed on 8 December, 1987, 1,846 ground-launched intermediate-range (1,000-5,500 km) and shorter-range (500-1,000 km) ballistic and cruise missiles and 825 launchers of such missiles were eliminated. It also prohibited further production and tests of such missiles. It is crucial that along with the missiles and the relevant infrastructure, nuclear warheads were eliminated as well (around 3,500 units).

In October 2007 Russia put forward an initiative to globalize the INF Treaty regime. A Joint Statement to that end by Russia and the US was distributed at the 62nd UN GA and at the Conference on Disarmament (CD) afterwards. To promote this initiative, in February 2008 we presented to the CD a draft of Basic Elements of an International Legally-Binding Arrangement on the Elimination of Intermediate-

Range and Shorter-Range (Ground-Launched) Missiles open to a broad international accession. Regrettably, this proposal received no practical support, and missiles that Russia renounced are still produced elsewhere in the world.

The Treaty on the Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (START) signed by the USSR and the US in 1991 has played a historic role in ensuring the international peace, strategic stability and security. Pursuant to the START Treaty, our country was to reduce the number of strategic nuclear delivery vehicles to 1,600 units and the number of warheads attributed thereto to 6,000 units. These obligations have been fully met ahead of schedule. As of the deadline date of 5 December, 2001, the total number of deployed strategic arms (inter-continental ballistic missiles, submarine-launched ballistic missiles and heavy bombers) and warheads attributed to them had been cut down to 1,136 and to 5,518 units respectively.

The Moscow Treaty on the Strategic Offensive Reductions, signed by Russia and the US in 2002, was another contribution to nuclear disarmament. In accordance with its provisions, the US and Russia undertook to lower by 31 December of 2012 the limits of their strategic nuclear warheads to 1,700-2,200 units, i.e. approximately to one third of the aggregate limit provided for by START. These obligations have been fully implemented ahead of schedule.

The Treaty between the United States of America and the Russian Federation on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms signed on 8 April, 2010 in Prague, has become a new important stage in nuclear disarmament. Under the Treaty, the Parties were to reduce their nuclear arsenals to the level that should not exceed 700 ICBMs, SLBMs, and heavy bombers; 1,550 warheads and 800 deployed and non-deployed launchers of ICBMs and SLBMs, as well as heavy bombers. These levels are to be achieved by 2018, which leaves time for both parties to adjust their strategic offensive arms to the quantitative levels required by the Treaty.

From the practical side, the limits established by the Treaty mean that the nuclear arsenals of both countries will be reduced to the lowest level since the late 50s – early 60s when they entered a full-scale arms race. The current levels are much lower than those that existed back when the NPT entered into force. Thus, there is every reason to say that Article VI of the Treaty is being efficiently implemented.

Along with strategic nuclear weapons, Russia has by four times reduced its non-strategic nuclear potential and changed its status radically. Under the so-called presidential initiatives of the early 90s, the remaining non-strategic nuclear weapons were withdrawn from operational service, undeployed and concentrated in centralized storage facilities in the Russian territory. The latter fact may be regarded as our constructive response to the calls for lowering the level of nuclear weapons operational readiness ("de-alerting").

Russia has repeatedly called on NATO Member States to follow our example and as a first step to take all non-strategic nuclear weapons to the territories of countries that own such weapons, fully dismantle all the infrastructure created abroad for rapid deployment of such weapons and stop the practice of joint use of non-strategic nuclear weapons that implies engaging non-nuclear States in using nuclear weapons.

Mr. Chairman,

As of today, the practical implementation of the Russia-US START Treaty is our greatest priority in the field of disarmament. We have a lot of work to do in order to reach the levels of weapons established by the Treaty and enshrine its principles of equality, parity and respect for mutual interests in the international disarmament practice. Those are serious and important tasks. We believe it is illogical to distract oneself from their fulfilment for the sake of any new projects. To move forward, we first need to complete what we have started. Once the levels agreed upon have been reached, however, the START Treaty will still not exhaust

itself, remaining the most important factor of transparence and predictability in the Russia-US relations.

Any further progress in the field of nuclear disarmament will require taking into account all factors that affect the strategic stability. It would be extremely difficult to deliberate on any further steps in the field of disarmament without addressing the issues related to these factors. We believe that working in this area is the central path towards resolving nuclear disarmament issues. It is also the context in which we consider various initiatives with regard to nuclear disarmament, including conferences on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons.

We are fully aware of the extremely negative consequences of the nuclear weapons use and make all the efforts necessary to prevent it. At the same time, we are convinced that stressing the humanitarian aspects of the use of nuclear weapons use and attempts to use these issues for the earliest “delegitimization” of nuclear weapons will distract the international community from practical steps aimed at creating the international conditions conducing to their further reductions. If we are to achieve most tangible results, we need to prioritize the tasks more thoroughly.

We take note of the fact that our position regarding the need to account for all factors affecting the strategic stability when considering nuclear disarmament issues, is gaining wide international recognition. For instance, at the last session of the Conference on Disarmament the Group of 21 countries spoke out against the deployment of a global ballistic missile defence system, justifiably noting that such unilateral actions might impede discussions on further measures on nuclear disarmament. We appreciate the position of the Group of 21.

We are in favour of a realistic and pragmatic approach to nuclear disarmament. Nuclear disarmament should be considered as a step-by-step process taking place in the framework of general and complete disarmament under effective international control as stipulated by Article VI of the NPT Treaty.

The efforts made by Russia together with the United States with a view to reducing and limiting nuclear weapons are bringing us close to the edge where engagement of all the states with military nuclear potential will be required. At the same time, we have to take into account the nuclear weapons programmes of those States that refuse to join the NPT as non-nuclear-weapon States. It obviously does a great harm to the strategic stability and international security. Further substantial progress in the field of nuclear disarmament is hardly possible without positive dynamics on these issues.

Russia regularly informs the international community about the steps that is taking in the area of nuclear disarmament, including through the NPT Review process, the Conference of Disarmament and other international fora.

In the context of the cluster of issues we are considering, we cannot but touch upon the issues related to the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) as an efficient instrument for limiting the weapons and ensuring nuclear non-proliferation. The future of this Treaty is still of great concern.

I would like to avail myself of this opportunity to urge once again the States that have not signed and/or ratified the CTBT Treaty, especially the States from the List of 44 countries, to do so immediately and without any preconditions. Making this Treaty an effective international legal instrument is the imperative of today.

Thank you.