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AND ARMS CONTROL, MFA OF RUSSIA,
REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION
IN THE FIRST COMMITTEE AT THE 69TH SESSION
OF THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY
DURING THE GENERAL DEBATE
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Mr. Chair,

Let me congratulate you upon your election to this important post and wish you success in the upcoming work. Most certainly, you can count on the support of the Russian delegation.

We decided to touch upon some topics which seem to be the most relevant in the vast agenda of the First Committee. We will begin with the issues of nuclear disarmament which are in the focus of attention of this forum.

Elimination of the threat posed by the weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons, remains one of the key priorities of the international community. Russia is actively working in this direction taking concrete steps for limitation and reduction of nuclear arsenals. Over the last 25 years they have been reduced manifold. Under the New START Treaty we have set out a goal to reach the agreed aggregate levels of warheads, means of delivery and launchers by the early 2018. We believe that this objective can be achieved.
The New START Treaty is not the only existing agreement between Russia and the U.S. in the nuclear missile area. The Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF) of 1987, which is of unlimited duration, remains in force. Unfortunately, our American partners allow themselves to treat the INF obligations quite liberally by committing gross and massive violations that are already becoming a recurrent practice. It refers to the use of target missiles during the test of missile defense system and the commissioning of striking UAVs covered by the Treaty and definitions of intermediate and shorter-range missiles. There are grounds to believe that the scheduled deployment of Mk-41 launchers in Europe would become another serious violation of the INF Treaty. We hope that as a result of the dialogue that has started on these issues the United States will return to its full compliance with this important agreement.

It is obvious that for further advancement towards a non-nuclear world it is necessary to establish appropriate international conditions. The most essential of them is to ensure equal security and strategic stability as it is provided in the decisions adopted in the framework of the Non-Proliferation Treaty implementation. Nevertheless the most serious problems in this area have emerged and are accumulating, which, unfortunately, for some reasons almost totally fall out of the scope of vision of the First Committee. This is not right, taking into account the fact that disarmament does not happen in vacuum and its future to a great extent depends on the general state of "environment".
We have repeatedly drawn attention to the factors that negatively affect the strategic stability. Without their elimination the hopes for further movement towards "nuclear zero" risk to remain a wishful thinking.

The unilateral development of a global missile defense system without taking into account, and moreover to the detriment, of security of other states continues to be one of such extremely destructive factors. It heavily complicates international relations not only in the Euro-Atlantic but also in the Asia-Pacific region. A reckless policy of missile defense system development may become a serious impediment on the way to further nuclear disarmament and even create dangerous prerequisites for the resumption of nuclear arms race. This acute issue can be alleviated only if the states that are engaged in the development of missile defense potential begin to follow not in words but in deeds the principle agreed upon in the OSCE’s frameworks, which in essence is a universal principle, stating that the attempts to strengthen one's security at the expense of the security of the others are inadmissible. The faithful application of this rule should become a starting point for the search of mutually acceptable solutions in the future.

We also have growing concerns about the concept of Prompt Global Strike which is getting closer to the phase of its practical implementation. As we understand its goal is to establish a potential that would make it possible to almost immediately neutralize the defense capabilities of any “out of favor” country, leaving it without any time or opportunity for an armed response. Such research efforts are even more risky when they are undertaken in the context of the policy towards establishing one’s exclusiveness and overwhelming military supremacy
adding to the efforts to develop a global missile defense shield. The negative effects of the concept of Prompt Global Strike on the prospects of nuclear disarmament, *inter alia*, still remain clearly underestimated by the international community.

The threat of the placement of weapons in outer space is a third negative factor of strategic nature. Over several decades the UN General Assembly has been adopting resolutions on the prevention of the arms race in outer space, but there are no agreed solutions in this respect yet. Under these circumstances we believe that it is high time to take preemptive measures in order to prevent the transformation of outer space into the arena of military confrontation. We'd like to remind you that 10 years ago Russia came up with the initiative representing a political commitment not to be the first to place weapons in outer space. Up to date 10 authoritative states have joined this initiative. It allowed to start the work towards its universalization. We expect that a relevant resolution, which we intend to introduce together with the like-minded states during informal consultations on the 10th of October will be adopted at the current session. We call on everyone who shares the goal of keeping the outer space free of weapons to join the co-sponsors of this draft resolution and vote in its favor.

Naturally, the adoption of such a resolution will not address all the problems. We regard it as an extremely important but intermediate step on the way towards a legally binding prohibition of the placement of weapons in outer space. The updated draft of a relevant international treaty has been presented jointly by Russia and China at the Conference on Disarmament last June. We are looking
forward to its thorough and constructive examination by the international community.

We deem it relevant to note that Russia is not only focusing its attention on the need to join the efforts of states with the view to eliminating the factors that undermine stability, but also undertaking practical steps at the national level in this direction. Over the recent years in addition to a number of initiatives aimed at preservation of peaceful outer space, Russia has made proposals to sign a legally binding agreement, which would provide guarantees that the U.S. and NATO missile defense components would not be targeting Russia. We ratified CTBT back in 2000. Long time ago we pulled back the non-strategic nuclear weapons to our territory and put them to the permanent storage sites having called on other states possessing such weapons to follow our example. We have consistently called for establishing a common European security space and for bringing the conventional arms control regime in Europe in line with the current military and political realities. Unfortunately these initiatives have not been met with a relevant response.

Mr. Chair,

We are entering the final phase of the current NPT review cycle. Next April the IX Treaty Review Conference will start its work. It is important that we come to this event with tangible results. The consolidation of the "Geneva Package" on the situation around the Iran’s nuclear program became a major recent achievement. Now, together with our partners in the Group of Six and our Iranian colleagues, we are continuing our work on comprehensive definitive settlement.
We note with satisfaction the firm intention of all parties to come up with positive results as soon as possible. It seems that the negotiators managed to come much closer to finding the way out on all unsettled issues of the arrangement, which is currently being worked out. The time has come to take uneasy political decisions. We should not lose the existing opportunities for such a settlement. We intend to further actively contribute to reaching an agreement within the established timeframe.

The signing by all nuclear powers of the Protocol to the Treaty on the establishment of Nuclear Weapon Free Zone in Central Asia on May 6, 2014 is a tangible result. We hope that a similar Protocol to the establishment of the Nuclear Weapon Free Zone Treaty in the Southeast Asia (the Bangkok Treaty) will be signed soon.

The results of the regular NPT Review Conference will much depend on whether it will be possible to implement in the near future the decisions on holding a Conference on the establishment of a zone free from nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East adopted in 2010. We believe that as a result of a number of informal consultations held within last year we managed to move from the dead-point. The countries of the Middle East region have demonstrated their readiness to reach reasonable compromises on a number of issues. It can be argued how substantive the achieved progress is but there is no doubt that the progress is there. It gives a reason to believe that with the necessary political will the countries of the region will manage to agree on the draft agenda and the final document of the Conference. That is why it is important not only to
continue but to intensify the preparatory process. Russia on its part as one of the co-conveniers of the Conference on the establishment of a WMDFZ in the Middle East will do its utmost to ensure its convening before the end of this year.

In the context of nuclear non-proliferation we would like to emphasize the following point of our concern. It is the matter of the so-called "nuclear sharing" in NATO member countries. Within these arrangements the non-nuclear members of the alliance accept nuclear weapons on their territory and participate in the planning of their use while their military and air forces participate in nuclear strike training. We fully share the view of the Non-Alignment Movement member states that such a practice is incompatible with either the letter or the spirit of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. Let us remind that under Article I of this Treaty the State Parties that possess nuclear weapons undertook "not to transfer to any recipient whatsoever nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices or control over such weapons or explosive devices directly, or indirectly". In their turn the non-nuclear States under the NPT Article II undertook not to receive the transfer from anyone of such control directly, or indirectly. We call on NATO member states to bring their policy in compliance with their obligations.

The chemical demilitarization in Syria became one of the major achievements in the area of WMD non-proliferation and disarmament. Under unprecedented difficult conditions the Syrian authorities eliminated chemical arsenals within the shortest time and in full compliance with their obligations by ensuring – as it was several times confirmed by the UN and OPCW officials – the high level of cooperation with these international organizations. As a result, the
topic of the so-called Syrian chemical dossier is not anymore of an urgent nature. Now it should be considered under the regular procedure of a specialized international entity - i.e. the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical weapons (OPCW).

Mr. Chair, in conclusion let me say a few words on the topic, which does not leave anyone indifferent. It is the issue of the current state of affairs in the disarmament mechanisms of the UN system. If the First Committee is functioning more or less productively, such renowned and prestigious entities as the UN Disarmament Commission and the Geneva Conference on Disarmament have experienced stagnation for many years. It is clear that the existing situation can not be considered as normal. However, it is also obvious that the reasons for its losing the track are not associated with some "inborn defects" of the UN disarmament triad. Actually, this stagnation has mainly to do with the differences in the scale of priorities of participating states and the lack of political will to search for mutually acceptable compromises. In this situation some of the partners are tempted to shift negotiations to the new fora as if they could easily achieve meaningful international agreements there with the participation of all states with relevant military potentials. Such an illusion would threaten to bring serious damage to the existing institutions while the new full-fledged effective mechanisms were not established. We believe that the best possible way out would be to focus our efforts and attention on the search for constructive solutions on the program of work of the Geneva Conference. This is the goal of the draft statement in support of CD that we intend to put forward with other like-minded states at the current session of
the First Committee. We call on all the countries that share our approach to join this statement as co-sponsors.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.