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New York

Speech at Summit of UN Security Council Member-States on Nuclear Disarmament and Non-Proliferation

PRESIDENT OF RUSSIA DMITRY MEDVEDEV: Ladies and gentlemen,

I count on this session of the Security Council, invoked through an initiative by President of the United States Barack Obama, to contribute to resolving a variety of international problems, first and foremost in nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament.

I think that it is clear to everyone today that international security is one for all. It is influenced not only by events in areas of conflict around the world, but also by instability within individual nations. If we want the global community's collective actions to be effective, we must discuss the problems that have accumulated, sincerely, thoroughly, and in depth; we must analyse them and develop thought-out decisions. That is precisely the goal of the Security Council resolution that we have just passed. Its measures constitute a realistic programme of action for the international community to react effectively to common nuclear threats.

Russia has always been a reliable, dependable partner in the area of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. Russia and the United States have undertaken an unprecedented reduction in strategic nuclear arsenals within the framework of Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty [START]. At the same time, we have often stated that we are ready to go even further, to reduce our arsenals of strategic offensive arms carriers more than three-fold; now this topic is under discussion and we are talking it over with our American partners. We have agreed with the President of the United States that we are also ready to work together on the challenges of missile proliferation. We count on all interested states to participate in this work as well.

Today's meeting is the prologue to large-scale, serious work, which should have a major effect on improving the global situation. It will involve a summit on nuclear security that is planned for next year, as well as a conference where we will look into the provisions of the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and sign a new, legally-binding Russian-American Treaty on the Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms. We are doing everything possible to be ready to sign this document by December.

Our common goal is to resolve problems in the area of non-proliferation and disarmament. Clearly, this cannot be done instantaneously: there is too high a level of distrust between states. However, it must be done.

I particularly want to emphasise that the non-proliferation situation is changing less rapidly than we would like. At the same time, the old, traditional threats are not decreasing, and meanwhile, new threats are arising. Among them, one of the most dangerous (as other heads of state have just mentioned) is the threat of nuclear

components falling into the hands of terrorists. I think that you would all agree that the current system of security in this area needs modernisation, and we must brainstorm together on ways to make it modern and effective.

We also need to give some serious attention to the problem of peaceful nuclear energy. Clearly, new nuclear power plants are critical to the resolution of many problems, first and foremost in developing nations; they can stimulate economic growth in entire regions, improving living standards for millions of people all over the world. But nations implementing such programmes must strictly observe non-proliferation agreements. I am specifically emphasising this issue here, at the Security Council.

I would like to talk about what we perceive to be the priorities for international cooperation in this very important area. There are several. First, it is imperative to continue improving and strengthening the global regulations on non-proliferation and disarmament. They should be based on international mechanisms and, most importantly, on the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. We should also create and develop a universal system of safeguards for the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Second, we must encourage the rapid signing and ratification of the Agreement on the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, which would finally allow for it to go into effect. This is an extremely important task.

Third, we must be more active in the use of new non-proliferation mechanisms – first and foremost, those passed through UN Security Council Resolution 1540 on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, proposed by Russia and the United States, and the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism.

And finally, it is clear that the efficacy of many of these problems depends on the active, constructive participation of all sides.

We count on the Russian-American efforts in this area to be supported by all nuclear states. Non-nuclear states must also continue to fulfil their duties in non-proliferation, as their contribution to creating an international situation conducive to real nuclear disarmament.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasise that Russia is ready to continue working actively in the interests of peace on earth and in the interests of our civilisation's future.

Thank you.