



BELARUS

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UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

THE CONFERENCE ON FACILITATING THE ENTRY INTO FORCE OF THE COMPREHENSIVE NUCLEARTEST-BAN TREATY

New York, 26 September 2013

STATEMENT

**by His Excellency Vladimir MAKEI
Minister of Foreign Affairs of Belarus**

I am honoured to speak today at the first ever high-level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament that was convened at the initiative of the Non-Aligned Movement. The Belarusian delegation associates itself with the statement made by the President of Iran on behalf of the NAM.

I am speaking on behalf of the state which has made a significant contribution to the process of nuclear disarmament, abandoning the right of possession of a substantial nuclear arsenal. Twenty years ago, in July 1993, Belarus was the first of the states of the former Soviet Union to accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons as a Non-Nuclear Weapon State.

On behalf of the country seriously affected by the disaster at the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant and familiar with the devastating consequences of radioactive contamination, I would like to state: Hiroshima and Nagasaki must never be repeated. We are convinced that the only way that will guarantee this is through consistent practical steps towards the complete elimination of nuclear weapons.

In this regard, I regret to note that the process of nuclear weapons renunciation, which the international community welcomed in the 1990's in some countries, has not received its continuation in the new millennium. The process of the creation of zones free from nuclear weapons has lost its dynamism and momentum. So far, there is no such a zone in the Middle East. The European continent is not covered by such a zone either.

Moreover, some states seek to develop its military nuclear program, and modernize nuclear weapons and their means of delivery. For Belarus, as well as for the vast majority of countries that already made statements today this is unacceptable.

Belarus has been and remains committed to the NPT. It is our deep conviction that the renunciation of nuclear weapons should not weaken but strengthen sovereignty, territorial integrity, and expand opportunities for economic development.

In this context, I would like to stress that the liberal way in which some states interpret their security guarantees extended in the Budapest Memorandum to Belarus in connection with the withdrawal of her nuclear weapons, is a factor negatively affecting our national security. I would like further to emphasise that such precedents provide unambiguous and negative signal to the countries that consider the consequences of nuclear disarmament for themselves.

In conclusion, I wish to express my hope that the General Assembly as the main body of the UN will find the right response to the challenges of achieving complete nuclear disarmament and give the necessary impetus to the Conference on Disarmament, so that it will resume negotiations, as well as to the 2015 NPT Review Conference with the objective of establishing a specific time frame to achieve "the nuclear zero".