

**United Nations General Assembly
Sixty-first session
First Committee
General debate**

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Statement

**by Mr. Igor Fissenko,
Head of the Department of International Organizations,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Belarus**

Madam Chair,

Please allow me on behalf of the Delegation of the Republic of Belarus to congratulate you upon the election to the post of the Chairperson of the First Committee.

You may rely on our support and cooperation.

Madam Chair,

It is hard to refrain from criticism speaking about the results of the multilateral fora in the field of international security, arms control and disarmament. We are well aware of the problems arising on the way of new initiatives as well as in the process of implementation of the treaties which are the foundation of the current system of the international security.

First of all I mean the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. For Belarus, as one of the few countries that voluntarily renounced an opportunity to continue to possess nuclear weapons, the issues of the implementation of NPT remain to be of a primary importance. Belarus fully implements its obligations under agreements in this field and initiated the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central and Eastern Europe.

In this regard we note with satisfaction the conclusion of the Treaty on the Establishment of a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia. Four from five Central Asian states are our partners within the Collective Security Treaty Organization. We welcome this step of our partners. We shall support the relevant draft of the resolution of the First Committee.

A most affected by the Chernobyl disaster, Belarus would like to caution from the high UN rostrum that use or threat of use of the nuclear weapons for the settlement of any kind of international disputes are absolutely unacceptable. This is our firm position and we intend to defend it together with our partners.

During the Non-Aligned Movement Summit in Havana Heads of States confirmed that the issues of nuclear disarmament are of a high priority. Efforts aimed at nuclear non-proliferation should be in parallel with the simultaneous efforts for nuclear disarmament and should not be in conflict with inalienable right of states for a peaceful use of nuclear energy. Being a member of Non-Aligned Movement Belarus fully shares the approach of the Movement to the disarmament and international security agenda and aligns itself with the statement made on behalf of NAM.

Unfortunately the list of issues that should be resolved in order to eliminate the nuclear danger is not becoming shorter. 10 years from the opening of the CTBT for signature were not sufficient to ensure its entry into force. Belarus supports the 2006 Ministerial Declaration on CTBT. We hope that the progress in ratification and signing of this important treaty will be possible.

Banning of the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices remains an important issue on the agenda. Belarus supports the so called “package approach”: the Conference on Disarmament should begin its negotiations on FMCT and simultaneously its substantive work on the prevention of arms race in outer space and negative security assurances in the frames of reestablished special committees. We note with satisfaction that the discussions in the CD became more active last year and hope that the fact that in 2006 it approved only procedural report will not cause the negative consequences for its future work that cannot be overcome.

It is a long and difficult way from the development of weapons of mass destruction to the time when their threat to the peace is fully realized and the effective universal international mechanisms of control are created. The price to be paid for enduring this way is extremely high – lives of human beings, economic resources are diverted from the needs of development. Decades of efforts need to be spent by international community to establish a control over the WMD and to ensure their elimination.

That is why it is so important to take preventive measures. Belarus is the sponsor of the resolution “Prohibition of the development and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons: report of the Conference on Disarmament”. Only in two years the draft will be introduced again at the First Committee. Nevertheless, the fact that this resolution was not adopted by consensus during the 60th session of the General Assembly is an alarming signal. In this regard we would like now to reiterate the request for like-minded delegations to support the draft resolution.

Madam Chair,

We are convinced that the only way to decrease sad consequences of the misuse of conventional weapons is to insure the most extensive, multilateral approach in addressing the issues of disarmament and arms control.

Despite the fact that the 2006 Conference to Review the Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, has not produced an outcome document, Belarus confirms its commitment to full implementation of the Programme of Action.

We proceed from the fact that namely the problem of illicit transfers of SALW, for example in violation of the arms embargoes as well as the transfers to illegal armed groups and terrorist organizations has always been and remains to be a matter of concern for the international community. The lawful trade may be discussed only in the context of combating the illegal transfers.

Belarus is ready to take part in the discussion of the relevant initiatives. On the same time we are convinced that the future agreements should not limit the right of states for self-defence as well as the right for a legal arms trade. Such agreements should be based on the existing international criteria and principles of conventional weapons control.

Belarus stands for universalisation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction. We fully implement the obligations under the provisions of the Convention. We express our gratitude to the states and organizations that assist Belarus in destruction of landmines stockpiles.

Madam Chair,

It is the point of view of Belarus that regional approach to security is important. Last year our country had an opportunity to demonstrate its vision of the ways to address the problems of international security during its chairmanship in the OSCE Forum on Security Cooperation. This year we are chairing the Collective Security Treaty Organization, which activity has a crucial importance for the regional security. This organization enjoys a status of observer in the General Assembly. Belarus attaches great importance to the elaboration of additional bilateral confidence- and security-building measures with neighboring countries.

The regional approach is important but, to our firm believe, – it should be an integral part of a global approach.

We fully reaffirm our commitment to preserve the existing UN disarmament machinery, namely, First Committee, Conference on Disarmament and Disarmament Commission.

In conclusion let me wish all delegates a productive and fruitful work.