

PC.DEL/260/10
15 April 2010

ENGLISH
Original: RUSSIAN

Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY MR. ANVAR AZIMOV,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

15 April 2010

**In connection with the signing of the Russo-American Strategic Arms
Reduction Treaty**

Mr. Chairperson,

A historic event took place on 8 April of this year: The presidents of Russia and the United States of America, Mr. Dmitry Medvedev and Mr. Barack Obama, signed in Prague a new Treaty on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms.

The Treaty has been concluded for the immediate future. It replaces the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) that expired last year, and also another Russo-American treaty currently in force on the reduction of strategic offensive capabilities.

The START Treaty has played an important role in ensuring international peace and strategic stability and security. It has served as the basis for the establishment of a qualitatively new climate of confidence, transparency and predictability in the process of cutting back strategic offensive weapons. The concerted actions taken by Russia and the United States in this area have made the world a more stable and safer place, making it possible to move from an era of "coexistence" to a stage marked by partnership and mutually advantageous co-operation.

Other parties to the START Treaty, alongside Russia and the United States, were Belarus, Kazakhstan and Ukraine. The historic role of that Treaty would have been incomplete without the considerable efforts taken to implement it by Minsk, Astana and Kiev and also without their full compliance with their commitments under the Lisbon Protocol of 1992. Their responsible decision to agree on the removal of nuclear weapons from their territories and to accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) as States not in possession of such weapons strengthened the security of Belarus, Kazakhstan and Ukraine and had a favourable effect on strategic stability as a whole.

In its work on the new Treaty the Russian Government based its position on a carefully conducted analysis of the real state of affairs in the sphere of nuclear weapons and on our country's objective strategic requirements and capabilities. We at all times took the

view that the principle of equal and indivisible security of the parties represents the cornerstone for progress in nuclear disarmament. Proceeding on that basis, we worked to conclude the kind of agreement that, given a consensually established lowering of the ceilings for strategic offensive arms, would enhance the security of Russia along with global strategic stability, while ensuring a steady relationship with the United States.

We consistently endeavoured to see to it that all the provisions of the Treaty were formulated on the basis of strict parity. Any agreement in the field of disarmament, and all the more such an important one as the new all-embracing START Treaty, is based on a highly complex web of interrelated compromises worked out by the delegations during negotiations. Accordingly, the most important thing is to ensure the maintenance of a balance of those interests that ultimately define the concept of “strategic stability”. We believe that we have succeeded in this effort and that everyone will profit from this predictability.

At the signing of the Treaty the Russian Federation issued a Statement on Missile Defence. We take the view – and our United States partners are aware of this – that the Treaty can be effective and viable only if there is no qualitative and substantial quantitative enhancement in the capabilities of missile defence systems, which can, in the final analysis, pose a threat to the Russian strategic forces.

The Treaty enters into force from the moment the instruments of ratification are exchanged. Both we and our United States partners intend to maintain the necessary momentum by synchronizing the ratification process.

The Treaty has been signed for a period of ten years. There is provision for the possibility of extending it at the decision of the parties for a period of not more than five years, provided that it has not been replaced before its expiry by a subsequent agreement on the reduction and limitation of strategic offensive arms.

A special body known as the Bilateral Consultative Commission is being established to ensure the viability and effectiveness of the Treaty and to deal with any unclear aspects connected with its implementation.

All in all, the new agreement marks a transition to a higher level of co-operation between Russia and the United States in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation and establishes a foundation for a qualitatively new relationship in the military strategic sphere in addition to reaffirming the fact that both countries share common goals in matters having to do with the strengthening of mutual and global security. The Treaty opens up additional possibilities for the further development of bilateral partnership between Russia and the United States.

The signing of the Treaty on the eve of the Nuclear Security Summit and the Eighth NPT Review Conference confirms the commitment of Russia and the United States to the implementation of their commitments under Article VI of the START Treaty.

There is no doubt but that the conclusion of this Treaty will have a favourable effect on the strengthening of the non-proliferation regime and on the expansion of the nuclear disarmament process, including the creation of conditions to make it possible to impart to that process a multilateral character over the longer term. We call upon all States without exception, and particularly those that are in possession of nuclear arsenals, to join the efforts

of Russia and the United States in this area and to contribute actively to the process of disarmament.

Thank you for your attention.