

Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty
Ministerial Meeting

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**Address by
His Excellency Sergei Martynov
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First of all let me thank the distinguished Co-Chairs of the Conference, as well as the Provisional Technical Secretariat for their impressive work on the preparation of the Conference and reaching an agreement on the draft Final Declaration, which we fully endorse.

For thirteen years from the time the Treaty was opened for signing, the trustworthy verification system has been set up. Mechanisms for providing objective and accurate information to the member-states have been installed. The Provisional Technical Secretariat has acquired profound scientific and technical expertise.

The Treaty is approaching the universal status, but has not reached it yet. Unfortunately the CTBT has not been able to fulfill its main goal – complete prohibition of all nuclear devices explosions.

The Republic of Belarus took with great regret the news about the nuclear test carried out by DPRK on 25 May 2009 in breach of UN Security Council resolution 1718. This act caused serious damage to international initiatives on securing the nuclear arms non-proliferation regime. The Republic of Belarus hopes that DPRK will ensure the implementation of the UN Security Council decisions and refrain from actions that pose threat to peace and security in the North-East Asia region.

I hope that these regrettable events, condemned by the international community, will become an incentive for the consolidation of the international community efforts. They should also foster concrete steps aimed at strengthening the NPT based international security system and ensuring the balance of interests of both nuclear-weapon states and non-nuclear-weapon states.

I would like to stress special role and responsibility of nuclear-weapon states. We are convinced that the signing and the ratification of the CTBT as well as other practical steps in the field of nuclear disarmament would promote mutual confidence among the states and strengthen the non-proliferation regime.

We are inspired by encouraging signals of growing attention to disarmament and non-proliferation agenda in individual states as well as in the international fora. This is the case when a "climate change" is rather a benefit. We hope that it will have practical implications.

I would like to note that Belarus, as a member of the START Treaty, which will expire this December, welcomes the intention of the Russian Federation and the United States to negotiate further cut downs and limitations of strategic offensive arms and conclude new legally binding agreement.

For Belarus the membership in the START Treaty, formalized by the Lisbon Protocol, and the decision to accede to the NPT as a non-nuclear weapon state are interrelated. Belarus has fulfilled all its nuclear disarmament obligations and being a party to the relevant treaties has always been a strong supporter of the international non-proliferation efforts.

We are of the view that the decisions of the last decade of the XX century both preceding the NPT indefinite extension and inspired by this event should be unconditionally fulfilled. The CTBT is undoubtedly holding a central place among such agreements and has important meaning for the international community as a whole.

Responsible attitude to the accepted obligations as well as respect of the interests of various groups of states are crucial for the advancement of the international security agenda. We believe that along with the nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and ensuring indiscriminate access to peaceful nuclear technologies the provision of unambiguous legally binding security assurances to non-nuclear weapon states is a matter of vital importance.

Only co-operative efforts will be able to bring the international community closer to the final goal – general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control. Being faithful to the spirit and letter of the CTBT, an example of a realistic approach to the process of disarmament, we stand ready to further contribute to its earliest entry into force.