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Statement by

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The revitalization of the United Nations aimed at increasing its effectiveness in responding to the threats and challenges of the 21st century is imperative. Belarus as a founding member of the United Nations shares the concern of many other states with respect to the insufficient role of this universal organization in tackling the modern challenges.

We believe that a more comprehensive concept of collective security can serve the purpose of perfecting the Organization. At the same time, the implementation of the concept should not entail weakening of the powers of the United Nations General Assembly and Economic and Social Council, including in the area of international peace and security, especially under conditions of interdependence of development and security. It is highly important to preserve the stability of the existing multilateral system.

The prohibition and limitations of the use of force laid down in the United Nations Charter must be reconfirmed in their original meaning. Implementing every letter of the recommendations contained in Cluster II of the Secretary-General’s Report could broaden the scope of using force in international relations.

We are especially concerned about **the misleading conclusions of the Secretary-General with respect to the application of Article 51**. Any interpretation allowing preemptive self-defense actions in response to an imminent threat of an armed attack against any State contradicts the literal wording of the Article, the provisions on the use of force enshrined in the United Nations Charter as well as the general doctrine of international law.

Belarus emphasizes that **the United Nations General Assembly is the only organ of universal membership that may consider the general principles of cooperation in the maintenance of international peace and security in accordance with the United Nations Charter**, even those related to strengthening the principle of non-use of force.

Belarus believes that the **toughening of the sanctions policy of the UN Security Council should be accompanied by the elaboration of standard legal criteria for imposing, implementing and lifting of sanctions**. The legal criteria must be developed and adopted by the United Nations General

Assembly in order to prevent serious humanitarian consequences of sanction regimes and breakdown of infrastructure of the targeted States. The Security Council should accept and follow these criteria while turning to sanctions as an extreme coercive measure.

The implementation of the UN Charter provisions related to assistance to third States affected by sanctions is of paramount importance for efficacy of sanction regimes. The principal UN organs, especially the Security Council, should advance the consideration of the problem within the frameworks of the United Nations to create effective mechanisms of consultation with the concerned States and mitigate unintended affects of the sanctions.

Belarus has always been an active advocate of strengthening the multilateral regimes in the sphere of disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. We are open to any proposals and recommendations that help reaching this goal. However, Belarus does not accept any possibility of decreasing the role of the United Nations, particularly the General Assembly, in this process.

The Non-Proliferation Treaty remains the most important instrument in providing the international community with a consistent program of action in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. We consider the upcoming Treaty Review Conference as a real possibility for the international community to overcome the inertia and make a step forward to reaching the goals stipulated in the Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference.

The issue of prevention of 'vertical proliferation', i.e. **development and production of new types of weapons of mass destruction** should not escape the attention of the international community. We believe that highlighting this issue in the world agenda contributes to prevention of new waves of arms race and implementation of the disarmament process.

Urgent international actions under the aegis of the United Nations are needed to cope with the conventional arms related problems. Many States have to divert huge resources from developing their economies and solving social problems in order to destroy conventional arms surpluses and anti-personnel mines stockpiles within the frameworks of the relevant international treaties. Universal mechanisms should be worked out to encourage and assist these States.