

**Remarks by Ambassador Mikhail Khvostov,  
Permanent Representative of the Republic of Belarus  
to the United Nations Office at Geneva,  
President of the Conference on Disarmament  
on the occasion of UNIDIR event to commemorate  
the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the entry into force of the NPT**

10 March 2010, Geneva

The 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the entry into force of the Non-Proliferation Treaty is yet another reminder of the acute problems linked to the very existence of nuclear weapons.

The Treaty became the first and the principal international legal document that aimed at solving the accrued nuclear problems.

The NPT, with its 189 states membership today, legally obliges the nuclear-weapon states not to transfer to any recipient nuclear weapons or control over such weapons.

Article VI of the NPT also obliges States Parties to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to nuclear disarmament.

The President of the Conference on Disarmament views this obligation as a main strategic goal of the Treaty and deems the CD a valid body for the implementation of this goal. Agenda items 1, 2 and 4 of the Conference are deeply interrelated with the objective of the Treaty.

The most important contribution the CD can and should make today within the objectives of article VI of the Treaty is to start negotiations on the Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT). This measure has been laid down in the 2000 NPT Review Conference final documents as one of 13<sup>th</sup> practical steps. There was also a call to the Conference to adopt its Programme of Work and to commence substantive work as soon as possible. Despite this we still haven't started negotiations.

Yesterday the CD President introduced its Working paper on the Programme of the CD's work. Tomorrow the CD will start discussions. I am sure, with some political will a compromise may be found.

We should all be aware that the immediate start of negotiations at the CD is vital for the Conference to preserve its primary role of sole body for substantive negotiations on priority questions on disarmament and non-proliferation.

Without negotiations we can not elaborate effective, legally binding instruments that comply with the interests of the States Parties.

As the Evans-Kawaguchi report suggests, the May 2010 Review Conference should not only recapture the lost ground but advance significantly both disarmament and non-proliferations agendas. That's why we consider that new measures, together with those that have not yet been implemented, including FMCT negotiations, deserve to be put on record again in 2010.

To inspire my colleagues let me remind, that the NPT itself being a product of negotiations within the framework of CD and its predecessors, is one of the vivid examples of positive combination of efforts that aimed to decline the nuclear threat to the world.

As for our national contribution to the NPT context I would like to remind that Belarus joined the NPT in June 1993 and voluntarily renounced an opportunity to possess existing arsenal of nuclear weapons.

After having made this significant contribution to the process of the promotion of a nuclear-weapons free world we consider quite legitimate to demand the assurances that nuclear arms would not be used against non-nuclear-weapon states. In our view the provision of such unambiguous security assurances is an important pre-requisite of trust and predictability in international relations and can contribute to strengthening the NPT-based nuclear non-proliferation regime.

Today, like 40 years ago, the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty preserves its crucial importance. The forthcoming 2010 NPT Review Conference will be an event to test the seriousness of our joint intentions to move forward. We believe that all State Parties to the Treaty are prepared for constructive work in taking necessary decisions to strengthen the NPT.