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РОССИЙСКОЙ ФЕДЕРАЦИИ  
ПРИ КОНФЕРЕНЦИИ ПО РАЗОРУЖЕНИЮ  
В ЖЕНЕВЕ

15, avenue de la Paix,  
1211 GENÈVE 20



MISSION PERMANENTE  
DE LA FEDERATION DE RUSSIE AUPRES  
DE LA CONFERENCE DU DESARMEMENT  
A GENEVE

Téléphone: (4122) 733 10 15  
Téléfax: (4122) 733 10 31

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**STATEMENT**  
by

**VLADIMIR YERMAKOV**

DEPUTY HEAD OF THE RUSSIAN DELEGATION  
AT THE 4<sup>TH</sup> REVIEW CONFERENCE  
TO THE CONVENTION ON CERTAIN CONVENTIONAL  
WEAPONS

Geneva, 14 November 2011

Distinguished Mr. President,

First of all allow me to congratulate you with the appointment to this responsible position and wish you and all of us led by you success in implementing efforts aimed at fruitful conduct of the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Review Conference on CCW that has started here today.

Russia shares concerns of the world community over the issue of use of certain types of conventional weapons, which may be deemed to be excessively injurious or to have indiscriminate effects. That is why we actively participated in the elaboration and adoption of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons and its Protocols. Russia was one of the first to accomplish internal national procedures on ratification, and is a full-fledged participant and one of the most consistent advocates of implementation of the "letter and spirit" of the already existing substantial "package" of CCW documents.

Mr. President,

Being one of the most important among functioning mechanisms of multilateral disarmament, the CCW is, at the same time, an essential part of the international humanitarian law. Russia highly appreciates the uniqueness and practical importance of the Convention and stands ready to continue to further promote its comprehensive strengthening and effective implementation.

Within the CCW we solve complicated and rather sensitive tasks pertaining to ensuring both international and national security of every individual State and protecting civil population and military personnel from unjustified suffering.

For three decades of the existence of the Convention its States parties clearly demonstrated within its framework their ability to adequately respond to relevant critical challenges and take corresponding balanced decisions that satisfy the interests of the whole international community.

It is important that our Convention all these years preserved its viability and also constantly demonstrated its dynamic relevancy allowing to come up with new legally binding arrangements even at the uneasy times when the international system of arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation is undergoing serious endurance tests.

In our view, today the Convention is a well-adjusted and self-contained disarmament mechanism functioning within the framework of international humanitarian law. Therefore, it would not be correct to put the reliability and importance of the Convention into direct dependence from the elaboration of additional legally binding arrangements within its framework. It is not a secret for anybody that the promotion of any new draft protocols to the Convention is impossible without their comprehensive expert examination and consensus approval by all CCW States parties. Only with such an approach they can become really viable and work for strengthening the Convention and increasing its reliability.

At this stage the most important is to fulfill a two-fold task: the universalization of the Convention and its Protocols and the guarantee of their faithful implementation by all States parties. We are sure that the full-scale implementation of the potential enshrined into the Convention will contribute to solving many humanitarian problems arising from the use of certain conventional weapons.

The Plan of action on universalization of the Convention and its Protocols adopted at the III Review Conference in 2006 deserves the highest appreciation. We are making our contribution to its implementation and welcoming the achieved results: for the past five years almost two dozens of States joined the Convention and its Protocols.

Mr. President,

The delegation of the Russian Federation positively assesses the preparatory work that has been already carried out prior to the Review Conference that has opened today. We believe that a solid foundation has been already laid for further constructive interaction. We shall be ready to participate, in the most active manner, in the forthcoming debates on specific issues.

Anticipating our traditional lively dialogue on the CCW issues that I await for the next two November weeks during Geneva Indian summer I would only note certain key approaches of the Russian Federation.

Mr. President,

I would like to particularly note the fruitfulness of our four-year interaction in the Group of Governmental Experts. Under the leadership of dynamic President - Mr. Domingo - the Group worked hard on a very uneasy issue of cluster munitions (CM). Expecting that all present here will join me, I extend the words of gratitude on behalf of the Russian Federation to Mr. Domingo and his team in general for a thoughtful and balanced approach applied in search of solutions acceptable to all.

It is unlikely that somebody could argue that cluster munitions can present a serious humanitarian threat, especially when they are used in simultaneous violation of norms of international humanitarian law and user's guides. From the other side, the due use of CM and solid technical improvement will promote reductions in humanitarian risks related to this legitimate type of weapon.

Russia approached with all the responsibility the participation in the negotiation process and engaged substantial expert potential. Being sincere, on a number of sensitive issues in search for mutually acceptable approaches and reasonable compromises we had to adopt rather uneasy solutions. As a result, Russia's approaches have gone through considerable evolution.

We consider the document elaborated within the Group as a basis for possible mutual agreements on CM although we still have questions in relation to some of its provisions.

We are pleased that in the text of the President's document we managed after all to make a significant movement towards consensus on a number of such key aspects as requirements to military and technical improvement of CM, conditions of their storage, elimination and transfer. The measures provided for in the last version of the document can, in our view, have a real positive effect in addressing humanitarian problems arising from the use of CM.

Let us be sincere. Our possible consent to obligatory elements of military and technical development of CM and elimination of munitions that do not satisfy new requirements will require from Russia considerable military and technical, organizational and financial and economic efforts. I shall give you one example. The expenses arising from possible prohibition on CM produced before 1980 will be comparable to, or most likely even exceed, expenses that are needed for solving the "mine" problem – and these are billions, not millions, of US dollars. In the circumstances of fluctuating crisis phenomena in the world economy it looks like very substantial national capital investments.

Mr. President,

I would like to draw special attention to the fact that all "cluster heavyweights", i.e. key manufacturers and users of this weapon, take part in today's UN negotiation format. Therefore, the "price" of our solutions is really high. One should not forget that the provisions on removing out of service or prohibiting CM that are put forward within the CCW far outweigh the total volume of munitions officially prohibited under the Oslo process. Only for Russia it would amount to millions of prohibited sub-munitions subject to eventual elimination.

We certainly hold in respect the decisions and practical measures taken within the Oslo process. However, we also have the right to expect understanding in relation to our real negotiation work within the CCW, its specific character and most importantly – rather serious expected results.

An important point. The solutions proposed at the outcome of GGE, due to their possible consensus character, are protected from propagandist political nature. In other words, these are the solutions that key CM's manufacturers and users, no matter how expensive they are, would be anyway ready to implement in practice in their countries and not for public PR or with a certain view of redistribution of the existing CM market.

Russia's view is that as a result of our work in GGE we have collected in our "piggy bank" many useful things. It is preferable not to lose this positive element.

~~We are proceeding from the fact that cluster munitions still preserve their status of non-prohibited type of weapon. That is why any proposals on automatic transfer to the CCW of any standards agreed upon on a voluntary basis outside the UN at informal platforms are regarded by us as counter-productive. If we indeed wish to solve the really existing~~

humanitarian problems we should search for a consensus within the CCW and not try to offer to "cluster heavyweights" the outcomes that are unacceptable to them.

The solutions that would be acceptable to all, in our view, could have become possible only when taking into account the following factors:

- Maintaining a reasonable balance between humanitarian concerns and legitimate defense interests;
- Mutual readiness to compromises;
- Bearing in mind that CM play unequal role in defense interests of different countries with unmatched economic and military and technical capabilities and approaches;
- Recognition of the obvious fact that possible arrangements on CM within the CCW with participation of key manufacturers of CM, as for their practical importance for solving CM-related humanitarian problems, could go far beyond the decisions taken within the Oslo process.

To our mind, the President's document contains a number of provisions and military and technical measures that can give a considerable positive humanitarian effect, including imminent.

We hope that a healthy pragmatism will triumph and we shall manage anyway to find here and now mutually acceptable solutions.

As for landmines other than anti-personnel mines, the time that has passed since our previous Review Conference has clearly demonstrated that this topic is not of priority today from the point of view of humanitarian threats. Taking into account the remaining principled differences in the approaches of States we believe that it is inappropriate to go back to work on the matter.

Mr. President,

It appears that, in general, an interesting, however rather intense, work is awaiting us. We are sure that the friendly and constructive atmosphere which is characteristic of all CCW events will prevail at this Conference too. From my part, I would like to assure you, Mr. President, and all the participants to the Conference of the readiness of the Russian delegation to the most active and constructive interaction.

Thank you for your attention.