

Russian Priorities and Approaches to Nonproliferation

Grigory V. Berdennikov
Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation
to the International Organizations in Vienna

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First of all, I would like to thank the organizers of our meeting for their initiative and the possibility to exchange views on nonproliferation, which is today one of the crucial problems facing the international community. Before tackling Russian approaches and priorities in the field of nonproliferation, let me briefly describe our assessment of the situation in this area. It appears to us that the following trends are present today:

First, a series of traditional threats of “horizontal” proliferation of WMD, where particular states act as its initiators.

Second, missile and missile technologies proliferation. Let me make it clear at the outset that none of the “threshold” states have developed ICBMs; essentially they rely on outdated technologies. But those technologies improve. The missile tests in India and Pakistan are the latest examples.

Third, new challenges related to international terrorism.

Fourth, aggravating technical factors. There are problems of an organizational nature (imperfection or lack of control or precise data regarding security, safety, and accounting of WMD or related materials in a number of countries. For example, there is no reliable information on safety and security of Pakistani nuclear weapons). There are unregistered or uncontrolled burial places and dumps of ecologically dangerous materials on land and at sea (the recent example is the IAEA investigation of irradiation of Georgian citizens by orphaned radioactive materials). There may also be cases of “brain drain” or, more exactly, migration of experts in the field of WMD.

Fifth, the aggravating political factors: tension and even violence in crisis regions.

Sixth, attempts to resolve complicated problems in this field using simple means, including the threat or use of force.

Thus, in our opinion, the overall situation in the field of nonproliferation is complicated. But we believe that it would be incorrect to consider it out of control or fatal.

On the one hand, the nuclear club was de facto joined by India and Pakistan who tested nuclear weapons. There is also no doubt that Israel has nuclear weapons. Iraq in the past implemented a secret WMD program, the DPRK tried to leave the NPT. Chemical weapons were not only produced, but also used in the Iran – Iraq war. About 30 states acquired combat missile systems.

On the other hand, the reduction of nuclear weapons steadily continues through the strategic arms reduction process. The architecture of international agreements has taken shape in the field of nonproliferation: NPT, CTBT, and conventions on chemical and biological weapons. It is supported by multilateral verification and export control machinery – IAEA, OPCW, MTCR, Wassenaar and others.

Though these mechanisms and agreements are neither universal, nor perfect, nor all of them have verification provisions, they can be credited with preventing or restraining the

proliferation of WMD on a large scale, and with helping to ensure the present level of strategic stability. According to our analysis, if there were no such architecture in place, 40 – 50 states would have acquired nuclear weapons. If there were no IAEA safeguards, nuclear materials at the 438 reactors existing in the world could have been diverted for military purposes. If there were no Convention on Chemical Weapons, about 100 countries could have started industrial production of chemical weapons. Without the Convention on Biological Weapons, about 80 countries could possess such weapons.

Besides, one should take into consideration that the roots of proliferation grow, first of all, in the areas of political crises. It was the rivalry between India and Pakistan and the Middle East crises that gave rise to WMD there. And vice versa, the renouncement by Brazil, Argentina, and South Africa of combat missile and nuclear-weapon programs was caused mainly by the normalized and democratized situation there.

Proceeding from the above, we formulate our approaches and priorities in the field of nonproliferation.

In the nuclear field Russia has been and remains committed to the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. Russia is in favor of strengthening the international nonproliferation regime based on the Treaty, inter alia through the adoption of Additional safeguards Protocols. We consider this regime to be a most important component of the fight against international terrorism, since these two problems put together – proliferation and terrorism – pose a real threat. As an NPT depositary, we do our best to increase its viability and authority. We have ratified all agreements in the nuclear disarmament field.

We are committed to the decisions of the 2000 NPT Review Conference. We take specific steps for their implementation. We think that the preparation process for the 2005 NPT Review Conference should be used to strengthen this fundamental Treaty. The discussion held at the first session of the Preparation Committee of the 2005 Review Conference showed that the situation in the field of multilateral disarmament and nuclear nonproliferation causes concern in the international community. Many delegations at the session linked this concern with the new US approach to a number of disarmament agreements, including the ABM Treaty.

Russia is a strong supporter of the role the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) plays in the implementation of the NPT in all of its aspects. The importance of Agency's activities aimed at countering nuclear terrorism should be noted, especially in light of decisions taken by the G-8 leaders in Kananaskis. The strengthening of the physical protection regime, ensuring the safety of nuclear materials, preventing illegal trafficking, improving systems of accounting and control of nuclear materials, increasing the effectiveness of the safeguards system, and development of proliferation-resistant technologies should help to exclude any access by terrorists to nuclear materials.

We attribute particular importance to the international Innovative Nuclear Power Reactors and Fuel Cycle Project (INPRO) undertaken by the IAEA. INPRO is aimed at a long term solution of the global energy problem while ensuring nonproliferation of nuclear weapons. We believe that an increase of coordination between INPRO and the Generation-IV Project would give a new impetus to both.

We are satisfied with the practical implementation of understandings reached in the course of Russia – US exchanges over several years, and with IAEA participation in the withdrawal to Russia of fuel from research reactors manufactured in the USSR and situated

in various countries. In August, fuel from a research reactor in Yugoslavia was transported to Russia for safe storage and consequent processing. The preparation and practical implementation of this operation marked a precedent of successful resolution of a whole complex of technical, administrative, legal and financial questions. We view it as an example of international cooperation in countering the potential threat of nuclear terrorism. We hope such cooperation will be continued.

Almost six years have passed since the CTBT signing. However, it is still far from entering into force. In our opinion, the failure of this Treaty would constitute a hard blow to the NPT, and would give an impetus to centrifugal forces within the nonproliferation regime. It is especially dangerous if one takes into consideration the new threats and challenges, including the threat of international terrorism.

An overwhelming majority of states considers the CTBT as the top priority for strengthening the NPT, and as the main indicator of the compliance of nuclear-weapon states with their commitments under Article VI of the NPT. In our view, it is important that until the CTBT's entry into force all states should observe the moratorium on nuclear testing.

Turning to the nonproliferation of other types of WMD, let me say that from the Russian viewpoint it is very important to ensure strict compliance with the CW? and BW? and work for their universalisation and strengthening.

There is no secret that the implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, which was negotiated in the main part before the breakdown of the USSR, is a significant burden for Russia. That is why we expect that assistance, promised to us upon the conclusion of the Convention, will materialize.

The construction of a CW destruction facility in the Saratov region, Russia, was recently completed with important assistance from Germany. We are very grateful. Such cooperation is a meaningful contribution to the implementation of the arrangements on global partnership, agreed upon at the Kananaskis G-8 Summit. In our view, at present the emphasis should be made on working out specific multilateral cooperation projects.

Turning to the biological field, we feel that it would be a major setback for BW nonproliferation efforts if the multilateral process leading to an agreement on the verification mechanism for the BWC dies out. We are dismayed by what took place at the negotiations last year. The results of almost a decade-long international effort are now jeopardized. An approach, denying "traditional principles of arms control" in the biological weapons field, does not seem to us to be a productive one.

In the export controls area, in our view, it is time that we address the issue of enhancing the effectiveness of multilateral fora, inter alia, by engaging major manufacturers as well as exporters of controlled goods in their activities. It is important that the issues in this area are addressed objectively, free of political bias.

For instance, the question of Belarus' membership in the Zangger Committee is blocked by one Member State. Explanations of this position that were given do not convince us that this Member State has good grounds for preventing Minsk from joining the Committee. In our view, this situation is abnormal since Belarus meets all the membership criteria. It is also a member of the Nuclear Suppliers Group.

Another example is non-membership of the Russian Federation in the Australia Group. In 1994-1995 we probed the possibility of joining this forum. At that time all the participants

agreed, except for two countries. Since then we have not raised this question and, I think, we will not consider it until members of the Australia Group reach consensus.

After the events of September 11, multilateral export controls fora have been actively involved in activities against international terrorism. As you know, at the plenary session of the Wassenaar Arrangements in December 2001 the Charter document of the forum - the Initial Elements - was amended by a new paragraph stipulating that Member States would continue to prevent terrorist groups, organizations and individual terrorists from acquiring conventional weapons and dual-use goods and technologies.

The Nuclear Suppliers Group now is going to discuss proposals concerning amendments to its Guidelines to reflect efforts on countering nuclear terrorism. In our opinion such an adjustment should be done in such a way that would contribute to the implementation of the tasks before the appropriate fora. Inter alia, adjustments should not be directed against any state or group of states or provide grounds for compiling "black" lists.

A draft International Code of Conduct on the Prevention of Proliferation of Ballistic Missiles is being considered now within the framework of the Missile Technology Control Regime. We assume that such Code may help to change the situation with missile proliferation for the better, provided that states possessing missile weapons or a potential for their manufacture but not currently members of the MTCR, would be ready to sign the Code. In fact, this document was initiated with the aim of encouraging such states to join the discussion on missile nonproliferation. It would help their participation if their suggestions concerning the draft Code made in the course of the Paris and Madrid meetings last year could be appropriately taken into account. We are not sure that just pushing through the present draft would contribute to the international efforts against missile proliferation. It is important first to agree with missile non-partners a mutually acceptable text of the document.

In our view the main objectives of the Code are not contradicted by the Russian proposal for creating a Global System of Control over Nonproliferation of Missiles and Missiles Technology. We think that in future we should discuss the establishment of a global regime of missile nonproliferation, based upon a relevant, legally binding arrangement, which could comprise both initiatives.

Regarding counter-terrorist aspects of nonproliferation, in our view a high priority should be given to completion of discussions on multilateral draft conventions, including the Russia-sponsored proposal for the International Convention on the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism.

Last but not least I should mention the importance we attach to the improvement of the national legislation and national systems of export control. Just recently we amended the Russian national legislation providing for heavier punishments for unlawful acts with goods and services of dual-use.

In conclusion I would like to note that there seem to be two ways to counter WMD proliferation - one is through international law and multilateral processes, the other is through the threat or use of force. Russia is in favor of the first one. In our view it would be wrong to divide the world into "responsible" and "irresponsible" states. In the long run the goal of nonproliferation is in everyone's favor.