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STATEMENT
by the Delegation of Ukraine
at the 2016 Substantive session of the UN Disarmament Commission

Mr. Chair,

On behalf of the delegation of Ukraine allow me to congratulate you and other members of the Bureau on your election.

We look forward to continued discussion on recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear-weapons; and on practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons.

Mr. Chair,

Ukraine consistently supports a multilateral approach to the disarmament and international security agenda. While recognizing the difficulties in the implementation of existing international treaties and in bringing new ones into force, as well as the deadlock in the disarmament negotiations, we fully reaffirm our commitment to maintaining and strengthening the current disarmament machinery and international cooperation in order to reinforce existing international disarmament and non-proliferation regime.

Mr. Chair,

We share the view that the use of nuclear weapons is the most serious threat that humankind faces nowadays. Ukraine considers the total elimination of nuclear weapons to be the only absolute guarantee against the scourge of nuclear warfare and supports the call for the immediate adoption of the comprehensive international agreement on the ban of nuclear weapons.

Pursuing this goal my country has demonstrated a proactive approach and set a pattern to follow by abandoning its nuclear capability and acceding to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) in November 1994, as well as by taking concrete steps to eliminate the use of highly enriched uranium for civilian purposes through the removal of all of its existing stocks from its national territory in March 2012.

At the same time, after Ukraine's decision to renounce its nuclear weapons, the Russian Federation occupied our territory under the artificial and groundless pretext of "protection of the Russian speaking population". Needless to say that this occurred in grave violation of the imperative norms of international law, the

Charter of the United Nations, the Helsinki Final Act and a number of bilateral and multilateral agreements, including the well-known Budapest Memorandum, which ensured the territorial integrity of Ukraine, inviolability of its borders and non-interference in the domestic affairs.

Ukraine is concerned by the accelerated militarization of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and Donbas, which further undermines international security and regional stability. Moreover Ukraine is deeply concerned by Russia's steps towards deployment of nuclear weapons on temporary occupied territory of Crimea. Russian occupants are thoroughly restoring soviet-era nuclear storage facilities and have already deployed the means of nuclear weapons delivery, like warships and combat aircraft. To facilitate this activity Russia may go even further by installing uranium enrichment facilities, organize production of dual use materials and apply technologies linked to the nuclear weapons on the peninsula.

Implementation of these plans would directly infringe the non-nuclear status of Ukraine and would further undermine international non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament regimes.

The occupation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and ongoing Russian aggression in the East of Ukraine have left without due control of the Ukrainian national regulator nuclear sites and material located there. In such circumstances we cannot exclude the illicit trafficking and malicious use of this material by the terrorists. As a result of the Russian aggression, Ukraine cannot resume control over more than 400 kilometers of its border. These sections of the border can be used by traffickers to illegally transfer to Ukraine and further to Europe radiation sources from Russia. The recent reports of the Ukrainian law enforcement agencies demonstrate that this is a real scenario.

Mr. Chair,

Even being under the Russian aggression Ukraine still remains a reliable partner who continues to fulfill its obligations under the NPT as a non-nuclear state. Ukraine continues to regard the NPT as the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime and renders comprehensive support to its effective implementation, further strengthening and universalization.

At the same time, we proceed from the understanding that the only way to protect world from nuclear proliferation is to make Ukrainian example of renunciation of the nuclear weapons a success story. Otherwise it will become much more difficult to convince any country to refrain from developing a national nuclear program.

Since the provisions of the Budapest Memorandum have been totally neglected by the Russian Federation as one of its signatories, we continue to call on the Conference on Disarmament to urgently develop and conclude a multilateral

legally binding instrument in order to provide security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.

Mr. Chair,

While emphasizing the importance of the implementation of the 2010 NPT RevCon decisions, Ukraine would also like to render its support to the establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. We consider convening a conference on this issue as one of the priority tasks, successful implementation of which will increase the level of regional and international security and strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation regime.

In this context we also encourage the universalization of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty's (CTBT) so that its entry into force would constitute a tangible stride in attaining the noble objective of a safe and peaceful world free of nuclear weapons. It is of the greatest importance that the integrity of the norms set out by the CTBT is respected. Not playing down the importance of the ongoing voluntary moratoriums on nuclear weapon tests which are highly valuable, they are not a substitute for a binding global ban. In this regard, we call on the relevant Member States to urgently ratify the CTBT.

Ukraine continues to support the development of the IAEA safeguards system and calls on all NPT Parties that have not yet done so, to conclude and strictly implement comprehensive safeguards agreements with the IAEA and to conclude and put into effect Additional Protocols. In this regard we condemn the seizure by Russia of the nuclear facilities of Ukraine in Crimea. Such violent act impedes the implementation of the IAEA safeguards on the peninsula.

We also continue to insist that negotiating and concluding the Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty (FMCT) will be essential both to constrain nuclear proliferation and to advance the goal of nuclear disarmament. Ukraine strongly appeals for finding common grounds on the issue of existing fissile materials stocks and immediate commencement of negotiations on the FMCT within the framework of the Conference on Disarmament.

Mr. Chair,

Addressing the enormous destructive power of conventional armaments continues to be the utmost importance for the international community especially in the context of regional security.

Foreign military aggression against Ukraine with the use of the regular military forces armed with modern types of conventional armaments and ammunition has significantly damaged the existing system of arms control and reduction of conventional forces. The idea of conventional disarmament has also been discredited. Let me also remind you about illegal transfers of conventional

arms from the Russian Federation to the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and Donbas region of Ukraine. Despite the international community's demand to stop the aggression, the RF is continuing to dispatch a large amount of weaponry into the territory of Ukraine thus deliberately destabilizing not only sub-regional but entire European security and stability.

Such a situation cannot be tolerable.

Mr. Chair,

Ukraine remains a devoted advocate of the efforts within the UN system and at the regional level to address the illicit small arms and light weapons (SALW) issue in all its aspects. In this regard, we expect the substantial outcome of the Sixth Biennial Meeting of States (BMS6) to consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action on Illicit Trade in SALW to be held 6-10 June 2016 in New York.

Ukraine also welcomes coming into force of the Arms Trade Treaty as a comprehensive instrument for establishing common standards in this field thus preventing conventional arms proliferation.

In conclusion, we would like to wish you, Mr. Chairman, every success in your future work and reiterate our full support to this end.

Thank you.