

STATEMENT
of the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation
to the United Nations Office and Other International Organizations in Geneva
Ambassador Gennady GATILOV
at the plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament
(Geneva, 20 January 2026)

Dear Madam President,

Dear colleagues,

First of all, on behalf of the Russian Federation I would like to congratulate you, Your Excellency, on assuming the Presidency of the Conference. I wish you and the entire team of presidents of 2026 patience and perseverance in leading our forum. Of course, you can count on the full support of the Russian delegation in this endeavor.

Madam President,

We are launching the session of our forum this year amid a challenging international environment. Naturally, the current situation on the world stage has a direct impact on the consideration of issues related to arms control, non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and strategic stability in general. Today's world requires effort, responsibility, and conscious choices. The relevance of this is obvious, especially now, when the situation on the international stage is increasingly deteriorating, long-standing conflicts are escalating, and new serious hotspots of tension are emerging. The search for compromise solutions is increasingly being replaced by unilateral and highly dangerous actions. Instead of dialogue between States, we hear the monologue of those who, by virtue of their power, consider it acceptable to dictate their will, lecture others on how to live their lives, and give orders. We feel all of this, of course, here too, during the discussions at the Conference on Disarmament.

In just a couple of weeks since the beginning of 2026, we have witnessed a blatant violation of the fundamental principle of international law and the UN Charter, aggression, attempts to interfere in the internal political processes of sovereign States, threats of force and the use of force. A striking example of the implementation of such a concept is the recent actions by Washington against Venezuela.

We express our firm solidarity with the people of Venezuela in the face of external aggression. We support the policy pursued by the Bolivarian leadership to safeguard the country's national interests and sovereignty.

Dangerous tensions are growing around the Islamic Republic of Iran. The US, which already committed an act of armed aggression against Tehran last year, continues to exert enormous pressure on it. We call on Washington to abandon its militant rhetoric towards Iran, respect its sovereignty, and prevent a repeat of last year's tragedy under false pretexts.

I cannot fail to mention the situation around Greenland, which has essentially caused panic within NATO. All this has a negative impact on strategic stability.

Our country continues to face military, political, and economic aggression from many Western States. European countries, intoxicated by Russophobia, continue to pursue the utopian goal of inflicting a "strategic defeat" on Russia. To this end, Europeans, including the entire apparatus of the EU in Brussels, spare no resources in supporting the regime of Zelensky. Ukraine continues to be pumped with weapons, which are then resold by Kiev's corrupt officials on the black market, while financial resources are mercilessly plundered. Kiev's sponsors turn a blind eye to this, even though these handouts, as well as the introduction of numerous packages of anti-Russian restrictions, are damaging the economies and populations of European countries.

As a result, we exist in conditions of significant loss of mutual trust between UN Member States. This undoubtedly affects the work of the Conference on Disarmament. In a situation where the positions of many Member States on various issues on the international agenda are diametrically opposed, it is very difficult to

find common ground on most issues in the field of arms control, disarmament, and non-proliferation.

A reasonable way out of this situation would be to insist more strongly that all members of the international community comply with international law, as well as to provide real assistance to the emerging new, more just world order, in which all States would have the right to their own model of growth, to independently, determine their own destiny without outside influence, while preserving their unique culture and traditions.

Madam President,

Despite all the negative trends, Russia has consistently proposed initiatives aimed at maintaining restraint and predictability in the field of arms control, disarmament, and non-proliferation, as well as in the sphere of international and regional security. However, their effectiveness and feasibility depend on the reciprocal actions of other States. Thus, after the United States took practical steps to deploy medium- and shorter-range missiles in various regions of the world, Russia was forced to abandon the voluntary moratorium on the deployment of similar weapons, which it had observed until recently. The same fate may befall the moratorium on nuclear testing: if the US carries out its threats, our country will simply be forced to respond in similar way.

The proposal by Russian President Vladimir Putin that Moscow and Washington voluntarily impose restrictions on themselves in terms of compliance with the central limits under the Treaty on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (New START) after the termination of this treaty is a constructive and good faith initiative aimed at preventing negative scenarios in a world where there will no longer be instruments containing direct restrictions on nuclear missile capabilities. At the same time, it is only feasible if the other Party to the Treaty does not take steps that violate the balance of deterrence capabilities, both in terms of the balance of strategic offensive arms and in the overall strategic stability equation.

In the current situation, the initiative to create a new reliable architecture for Eurasian security, presented by the President of Russia on 14 June 2024, remains particularly relevant. I would like to remind you that already back then Vladimir Putin emphasized that the Euro-Atlantic security system was not simply in crisis, it had collapsed. The time has come to replace it with a new security concept in Eurasia. It is obvious to us that there can be no return to the old models, in which the West played the leading role with its claim to exclusivity. We must take into account the new geopolitical and international legal realities and generate ideas which are not based on the conception “might makes right”, but on equality and a fair balance of interests. Our vision of Eurasian architecture is in harmony with the global security initiative put forward by Chinese President Xi Jinping. One of its key principles is the need to address the root causes of conflicts, whether in the Middle East, the Balkans, Ukraine, or Southeast Asia. This is the key to creating a more just world order and genuine multilateralism.

Madam President,

Against the backdrop of an extremely tense international situation, the activities of the UN disarmament machinery are becoming particularly relevant. States need not only to maintain the ongoing dialogue on key issues of international peace and security, which in itself is an important element in maintaining at least a minimum level of trust, but also to work together to create conditions for a return to a positive agenda in the relevant forums. We are convinced that the reason for the current stagnation in the activities of the disarmament fora lies not in their inherent shortcomings, but primarily in the inability or unwillingness of a number of States to engage in a truly equal and mutually respectful dialogue and to act in good faith in the interests of achieving concrete results.

We consider it necessary during the current session of the Conference to make every effort to normalize the activities of the forum as a key element of the UN disarmament machinery in order to return to the fulfillment of its negotiating mandate within the framework of the traditional agenda.

Madam President,

One of the key events in 2026 is the 11th Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which will be held in New York from 27 April to 22 May. We are convinced that the successful start of the current session of the CD could contribute to the productive conduct of the Review Conference, and the results of the latter, in turn, could provide good “food for thought” when discussing the whole range of nuclear issues at our forum. At the same time, both formats can only be successful if the delegations refrain from politicizing the discussions and are prepared to engage in a constructive exchange of views in order to achieve results that are acceptable to all.

Madam President,

We confirm Russia’s unwavering commitment to its obligations under Article VI of the NPT. At the same time, we consistently proceed from the understanding that steps in this sphere should be made in a way that promotes international stability, peace and undiminished and increased security for all. That is why the nuclear disarmament obligation under the NPT is placed in the context of the process of general and complete disarmament, and the efforts of the entire international community, including non-nuclear-weapon States, play an important role here. This understanding should underpin the work of the CD on all nuclear issues and, above all, on agenda item 1 “Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament”.

In addition, given the current geopolitical situation, agenda item 2 “Prevention of nuclear war, including all related matters” is particularly relevant. We believe that within this item it would be important to conduct an in-depth analysis of the entire range of accumulated problems in the field of international security and to seek ways to resolve them, including possible measures that could contribute to resolving the root causes of the current crisis and restoring trust between nuclear powers.

Finally, a substantive discussion on the topic of negative security assurances (NSAs) in accordance with agenda item 4 is highly relevant in the current circumstances. We believe that at this stage particular attention should be paid to those factors that hinder work on NSAs and progress in nuclear disarmament and

non-proliferation. Specifically, we are referring to the practice of NATO nuclear sharing and the forward deployment of US nuclear weapons in Europe.

I would like to emphasize that Russia does not consider the claims of non-nuclear NATO Member States to receive NSAs to be in any way justified or legitimate. The interest in such assurances shown by a number of other non-nuclear States that rely on Western “nuclear umbrella”, in our view, is equally unfounded. We are convinced that the desire of some non-nuclear-weapon States to ensure their security through so-called extended nuclear deterrence only encourages the modernization of nuclear arsenals by Western nuclear powers and provokes a nuclear arms race.

Madam President,

One of the priorities for the Russian delegation in 2026, as in previous years, is the work of the CD on agenda item 3 “Prevention of an arms race in outer space” (PAROS). We view with concern the plans and specific steps taken by certain countries to remove, under far-fetched pretexts, the ban on the militarization of outer space, which has been in place for decades, both *de jure* and *de facto*. Unfortunately, many Western countries, following the example of the United States, have adopted defense outer space policy documents that define space as “yet another operational environment” for conducting military operations. This approach undermines the fundamental principles laid down in the 1967 Outer Space Treaty, according to which the exploration and use of outer space is carried out exclusively for peaceful purposes.

The situation is complicated by US plans to implement the Golden Dome project, which combines the development of a global and multi-layered missile defense system against all types of missiles from any adversary, the build-up of counterforce capabilities to carry out a first disarming strike, and the placement of weapons in outer space. In essence, Washington is further departing from the fundamental principle of maintaining a strategic balance of power in the world, which is based on strict observation of the inseparable link between strategic

offensive and defensive weapons. This approach carries enormous risks for global stability and, in the long term, could hinder any dialogue on disarmament issues.

The issues of PAROS have relevance to many processes in the field of arms control and are of particular importance at the Conference on Disarmament. In this regard, the Russian delegation will continue to make every effort to promote the early start of negotiations within the Conference on the development of a legally binding instrument in this field. We continue to believe that the Russian-Chinese draft treaty on Prevention of the Placement of Weapons in Outer Space and of the Threat or Use of Force against Outer Space Objects (PPWT) as amended in 2014 can be a good basis for that. Also, as it is stipulated in UN General Assembly Resolution 80/21, the final report of the UN Group of Governmental Experts on Further Practical Measures for the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space, dated 23 August 2024, shall be used as a reference document, which effectively defines the structure of the future treaty and agrees on a list of potential elements, including obligations, prohibitions, and restrictions. We also count on the fact that the activities of the Open-Ended Working Group established by UN General Assembly decision 78/512 could make a meaningful substantive contribution to the relevant activities of the CD.

Madam President,

For the Russian Federation, one of the priorities remains the implementation of its initiative to develop an International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Chemical and Biological Terrorism, which was presented to the CD back in 2016 under the agenda item 6. We believe that the initiative has not lost its relevance at this point. Moreover, given the evidence that terrorist groups have access to the capacity to produce chemical and biological weapons components, WMD-terrorism could become a reality which requires decisive action based on clear and comprehensive international norms, which, unfortunately, do not yet exist. The draft submitted by Russia to the Conference is thorough and contains all the elements necessary to launch negotiations. I would like to emphasize that this idea is intended not only to provide States with new effective tools in the fight against WMD-

terrorism, but also to help overcome the long-standing stagnation in the Conference's negotiating activities.

Madam President,

The Russian delegation has been closely following all proposals from CD Member States aimed at revitalizing the substantive work of our forum. We note the interest of some States in discussing the issue of emerging technologies at the Conference including issues related to the use of artificial intelligence (AI) for military purposes. We understand their concerns, but at the same time we cannot agree with the idea to include this issue, which is completely new to the forum, on the CD agenda. We proceed from the assumption that all the most acute aspects related to military AI are already being considered in various international fora, including the Group of Governmental Experts on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems within the framework of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, as well as the UN Commission on Disarmament. We are confident that at this stage the discussion on AI in military domain is not mature enough for development of a relevant international instrument, as it is required by the Conference's negotiating mandate.

Madam President,

The Russian Federation welcomes any constructive initiatives and proposals aimed at effective organization of the work of the CD in 2026, which could bring the forum closer to agreeing on a comprehensive and balanced Programme of Work and resuming negotiations. That is why the Russian delegation supported the decisions to establish five subsidiary bodies (SBs) in 2024 and to re-establish them last year.

Unfortunately, the experience of these bodies was not successful. Not only the delegations failed to agree on substantive final reports within the framework of the SBs, but also the activities of the latter did not in fact contribute to bringing the positions of the CD Member States closer together on the forum's agenda items. On the one hand, this result points to the shortcomings of the decision on which the SBs

were based, and on the other hand, it demonstrated the delegations' unwillingness to compromise and resolve the accumulated problems.

Nevertheless, the Russian delegation is ready to discuss with the presidency and the CD Member States various options for organizing the work of the session and does not rule out the possibility of re-establishing the SBs. But the main task is not to repeat the same mistakes. That is why the work within the framework of these bodies, if such option is deemed appropriate, should be more focused, aimed at finding common ground and returning the forum to negotiations as soon as possible. This could be facilitated, for example, by the early consensus approval of a list of topics for discussion, as well as by determining what the final reports of the SBs will look like. All of this should be clearly reflected in a corresponding future decision.

Madam President,

The Russian delegation has consistently advocated for the principles of inclusiveness and multilateralism in the work of the Conference. At the same time, we are convinced that those States that are admitted to the forum as observers should contribute to the achievement of its goals and objectives, as well as the implementation of its mandate. Abuse of the CD platform by certain observer States for political purposes, which we have unfortunately witnessed on numerous occasions, only leads to further division and increased discord among Member States. This is completely contrary to our common interests and is simply unacceptable.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize that the Russian delegation is ready for productive cooperation with both the presidencies of the current session and the delegations of all CD Member States and observer States invited to participate in the forum. We intend to actively participate in substantive discussions and to promote in every way possible the fulfilment by the Conference of its tasks, as it is provided for in the final document of the First Special Session of the UN General Assembly devoted to Disarmament in 1978.

Thank you for your attention.