

STATEMENT
by the Delegation of the Russian Federation
at the General Debate of the session
of the United Nations Disarmament Commission
(New York, 9 April 2026)

Mr. Chairman,

We would like to express our deep regret over the lack of consensus on the agenda of the current session of the UN Disarmament Commission (UNDC) and, as a result, the inability to conduct a comprehensive discussion including within the working groups, as well as to develop recommendations based on the results of the three-year cycle of the Commission. At the same time, we are grateful for your efforts to organize an informal exchange of views on respective issues.

The current session of the Commission is taking place against the background of unprecedented developments in the world, indicating profound changes in the present system of international relations. Among them are the military operation and the subsequent humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip, the armed invasion of Venezuela and the capture of its legitimate president N.Maduro, the energy blockade of Cuba, unprovoked attacks against Iran with the aim to change legitimate authority under the pretext of supposed concern for non-proliferation. The number of countries whose statehood is destroyed before our very eyes by aggression is steadily growing. The consequences of using force against Tehran are rapidly bringing the Middle East closer to a humanitarian and environmental disaster and threaten to extend far beyond the region.

Ignoring the fundamental pillars of international law (IL) in order to achieve geopolitical objectives, refusing to recognize and take into account the core interests of other states, attempts to attain indisputable military superiority at all costs create a fundamentally new reality in the field of international security. Acting on the principle of “who is stronger is right” can undermine the foundations of sovereign equality and non-interference in the internal affairs – key principles on which the present world order, established after the end of the Second World

War, was built. Rhetoric and practical actions aimed at overthrowing the incumbent governments only aggravate the situation. The mandate received from the people is no longer regarded as protection against military intervention. In these conditions there is a high risk of the world descending into chaos, where the right of the strongest finally replaces the rule of law. The consequences will be extremely painful and affect everyone without exception.

These events provoked the profound crisis of confidence in intergovernmental institutions and formats, including the UN. The principles and parameters of ensuring security stipulated in treaties and agreements are no longer perceived as inviolable, while international structures demonstrate their helplessness in the face of a new reality. This directly affects the system of arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation (ACDN).

Aggression against Iran and bombing of its peaceful nuclear facilities placed under IAEA safeguards have become a direct attack on the NPT and a major blow to its regime. This Treaty and the non-proliferation rhetoric were used as an excuse to solve problems unrelated to non-proliferation. Iran's opponents, hiding behind good intentions, have created significant obstacles to the Agency's performance of its statutory verification functions. The inalienable right of States Parties to the peaceful use of nuclear energy, provided for in Article IV of the NPT, was called into question. The events around Iran may push non-nuclear states to search for alternative, non-conventional means of ensuring security. We hope that the upcoming 11th NPT Review Conference (New York, 27 April – 22 May 2026) will give a proper assessment of the illegal steps by western states and their negative consequences. It is important for us to preserve this unique and needed for the entire international community Treaty, which for many years has served as the cornerstone of the international nuclear non-proliferation regime.

The increased information stuffing from a number of western non-nuclear-weapon states regarding the possibility of acquiring their own or deploying foreign nuclear weapons on their territory is a very dangerous trend for the NPT. In particular, such statements are being made in Germany, Poland, Finland, Sweden,

Japan and other countries. The destabilizing schemes of the so-called “nuclear sharing” and “enhanced nuclear deterrence” practiced by the United States and its allies, as well as non-transparent cooperation within the framework of AUKUS partnership, have a destructive impact on the stability of the nuclear non-proliferation regime. The United Kingdom and France initiated efforts to build some kind of “common European nuclear deterrence” capabilities in addition to the US “nuclear umbrella”.

We are extremely concerned by the revealed information about London and Paris considering the idea of covertly transferring elements of nuclear weapons or a “dirty bomb” to the Kiev regime. This is not only a direct threat to Russia’s national security, but also a flagrant violation of Articles I and II of the NPT, according to which nuclear-weapon states undertake not to transfer nuclear weapons, as well as not to encourage anyone to acquire them, and non-nuclear-weapon states – not in any way to acquire such weapons.

Against the background of the deteriorating international security, it is regrettable that the United States not only rejected the Russian initiative for the Parties to the New START Treaty to voluntarily comply with the quantitative limits set out in the Treaty after its expiration, but also announced its intention to immediately start building up its nuclear arsenal “at the first order” of the head of state. In turn, our country intends to act responsibly and carefully. We intend to develop our policy in the field of strategic offensive arms on the basis of a thorough analysis of the US military policy and general situation in the strategic sphere. For the future we remain open to seeking equal and mutually beneficial dialogue-based solutions to comprehensively stabilize the strategic situation – provided, of course, that appropriate conditions for such engagement are established.

The actions of the current US administration, specifically President Trump’s order as of October 2025 regarding the resumption of nuclear testing, create serious doubts about the prospects of the CTBT’s entry into force. The US

abandonment of its national moratorium will inevitably trigger a “domino” effect. In this regard, responsibility will lie entirely with Washington.

When considering disarmament issues, it is impossible to ignore military, political and strategic realities, and any initiatives in this field must realistically reflect the state of affairs in the field of international security. Such an inextricable relationship is an objective reality which, in particular, was enshrined by consensus in the final document of the first Special Session of the UNGA on Disarmament in 1978. The document has laid out for decades to come the fundamental disarmament principles which remain relevant today and are a reliable foundation for any multilateral efforts in ACDN.

Mr. Chairman,

Scientific and technological progress and modern technologies, including space technologies, artificial intelligence (AI) and biotechnology, create vast opportunities for humanity and are becoming an integral part of our daily lives.

Russia attaches particular importance to the analysis of scientific and technological achievements relevant to ACDN. It is critical to identify and analyze challenges related to technologies and various research areas in order to reduce such risks to an acceptable level without hindering scientific and technological progress. At the same time it is necessary to assess objectively the advantages of such technologies, including from the perspective of compliance with the existing IL.

We still consider the UNDC to be an optimal forum to discuss the issue of new technologies in the context of international security due to its specialized and inclusive nature, as well as the proven effectiveness of the decisions taken. At the same time, this dialogue should not duplicate the consideration of issues related to new technologies that is already underway in parallel formats. In particular, we consider the Group of Governmental Experts of States Parties to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems as the optimal forum for relevant discussions. We believe that issues regarding the prevention of an arms race in outer space require further deliberation within the

specialized Open-Ended Working Group, while biotechnology issues should be addressed in the framework of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention.

Regarding weapons systems with the use of AI technology, we currently see no convincing grounds for the introduction of additional preventive restrictions or prohibitions. We proceed from the applicability and sufficiency of the IL, including international humanitarian law (IHL), to military means using AI. A vital element in ensuring compliance with the norms and principles of IL, including IHL, is human control over such weapons systems. At the same time the specific forms and methods of such control should remain at the discretion of states.

We proceed from the need of continued efforts to bridge the positions of states on certain most problematic aspects of the military use of AI technologies – in particular, on the development of a common specialized terminology, as well as common approaches regarding the application of the existing IL, including IHL, to these technologies, the maintenance of human control over such means, and the management of the risks and opportunities they create.

Mr. Chairman,

Current international landscape demands more than ever cooperation and dialogue aimed at de-escalation, reducing tensions, restoring trust, as well as reaffirming commitment to existing agreements in the field of ACDN. However, it is unrealistic to expect a full-fledged and productive discussion in conditions when the possibilities for such dialogue are constrained. In this regard, we view proposals for the so-called “optimization” of disarmament forums, including the UNDC, which seek to shorten the duration of sessions and statements, to be extremely harmful. The implementation of such ideas can in practice devalue discussions on critical international security issues and further aggravate already profound contradictions.

We remain fully committed to constructive work and cooperation with all interested delegations during this session of the UNDC.

Thank you for your attention.