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STATEMENT
by the Delegation of Ukraine
at the 2017 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; and on practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons. We believe that the UN Disarmament Commission continues to play an important role in the overall UN disarmament machinery, through its deliberations on specific issues relating to nuclear weapons and conventional arms.

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, we 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. It is essential that both non-nuclear and nuclear weapon States are involved in this process.

We share the view that the use of nuclear weapons is the most serious threat that humankind faces nowadays.

Ukraine demonstrated a proactive approach in this area 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.

Even being affected by the Russian military aggression and occupation of its territories, Ukraine continues to regard the NPT as a key element of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime. We render comprehensive support to its effective implementation, further strengthening and universalization.

Ukraine consistently stands for reducing the nuclear arsenals, cessation of modernization of nuclear weapons, and overall decrease of nuclear weapons' role in military and strategic doctrines of the states.

We have also to re-emphasize that the historic decision of Ukraine to renounce its nuclear weapons was primarily based on the clear international security guarantees provided by the Budapest Memorandum on Security Assurances signed by Ukraine, the US, the UK and the Russian Federation. We stand on the position that this Memorandum is valid and should be adhered to by all its state-signatories.

Mr. Chair,

Ukraine supports the universalization of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) with a view that its entry into force will constitute a tangible stride in attaining the noble objective of a safe and peaceful world free of nuclear weapons. We call upon all States which have yet to sign or ratify the CTBT, in particular the remaining Annex 2 States, to do so without delay.

We also continue to support commencing negotiations and concluding the Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty (FMCT) which 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. In this respect, we fully support the establishment of the high-level FMCT expert preparatory group and look forward to results of its work.

Mr. Chair,

As an advocate of maintaining peace and security with the lowest possible level of armaments, including conventional ones, Ukraine recognizes the important role of conventional arms control, including at the regional and subregional levels, and, accordingly, welcomes all respective measures in this field. Ukraine's consistent commitment to strengthening effectiveness of confidence building measures (CBMs) also remains unchanged.

Ukraine fully shares concerns that the illicit trade, spread and misuse of small arms and light weapons pose serious threat to security and stability in the world. Therefore, we consider the UN Programme of Action on SALW as an important tool in global efforts to combat this threat. We support proper implementation of the PoA as well as the International Tracing Instrument by all States.

Ukraine attaches particular importance to ensuring effective export control procedures in the sphere of conventional arms that meet all standing international requirements. Ukraine strictly adheres to the respective resolutions and decisions of the UN Security Council, Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the international export control regime Wassenaar Arrangement.

Ukraine also welcomes coming into force and implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty as a comprehensive legally-binding instrument for establishing common standards in this field thus preventing conventional arms proliferation. We continue to co-sponsor the ATT resolution in the framework of the First Committee.

Mr. Chair,

The issue of illicit transfer, accumulation and misuse of conventional arms should remain among priorities for the international community, especially in the context of regional security.

Russian military aggression against Ukraine with the use of regular military forces armed with modern types of conventional armaments and ammunition has significantly damaged the existing system of conventional arms control. The Russian Federation continues its massive transfers of military goods to our territory, both to Crimea and Eastern Ukraine, thus deliberately destabilizing not only sub-regional but the entire European security.

We have no right to underestimate such facts and we should tackle the issue of destabilizing accumulation and misuse of conventional arms with the highest level of responsibility.

Thank you.