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First Meeting of the Preparatory Committee
for the 2010 NPT Review Conference

Cluster II

Statement by

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Mr. Chairman,

Allow me at the outset of my statement to assure you of my delegation's full support in your endeavors.

Mr. Chairman,

The Czech Republic fully supports the statement of the EU delivered by the German Presidency. In addition to that, the Czech Republic wishes to touch upon export controls in more detail from its national perspective. While discussing cluster II issues in our view it is more than appropriate to draw attention of State Parties of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) to the work of the Zangger Committee (ZC) and its relevance to implementation of the NPT.

In 2006 the ZC celebrated the 35th anniversary of its existence. In this connection allow me to pay tribute to its first Chair professor Claud Zangger of Switzerland whose work was carried later on by Mr. Ilkka Mäkipentti of Finland, the second Chair. I would also like to commemorate dedicated and able leadership of the third Chair, Dr. Fritz Schmidt of Austria whose authority in export controls was internationally recognized for many years.

The origin of the ZC is closely connected with the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). The main reason why the Committee was established was a lack of specificity in export controls required by the Treaty, namely by its Article III, paragraph 2 a) and paragraph 2 b). It should be recalled that the ZC was playing a positive role during the cold war era in reducing the danger of nuclear proliferation since the former Soviet Union and the Eastern Europe states participated as the ZC Members.

Today the Committee has 36 members including all nuclear weapon States and European Commission as observer. The status of the ZC is informal. It does not have any budget. Its organizational structure is kept to the minimum. The Czech Republic serves as the Chair. The British Permanent Mission in Vienna provides the Secretary of the ZC, the Austrian Federal Ministry of Economics and Labour traditionally hosts the ZC meetings and the website (<http://www.zanggercommittee.org>). The Committee meets once or twice a year while a lot of work is done intersessionally. Decisions of the Committee are taken by consensus and they are implemented through members' respective domestic export control legislation.

The ZC Members reached common "Understandings" among themselves on clarification of the content of the Article III, paragraph 2 of the NPT and conditions and procedures that would govern nuclear exports to comply with NPT requirements on the basis of fair commercial competition. These are published in the IAEA INFCIRC/209 series. The character of the ZC is purely technical and does not discriminate against any state in the field of the peaceful nuclear cooperation. The ZC does not deny items on its Trigger List contained in INFCIRC/209 series. The list is updated as technology advances. There is a close cooperation between the ZC and the Nuclear Suppliers Group in harmonization of their Trigger Lists.

The ZC has enjoyed the long-standing recognition by the NPT State Parties as the faithful interpreter of its Article III, paragraph 2. I would like to stress particularly that in 1990, the ZC was mentioned by NPT conference by name and the conference provided a brief description of its aims and practices. While the Conference did not adopt a final document, Main Committee II agreed on language pertaining to a number of ideas and proposals concerning the implementation of the Treaty in the areas of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and safeguards. Main Committee II observed that ZC members had met regularly to coordinate the implementation of Article III, paragraph 2, and had adopted nuclear supply requirements and a Trigger List. It recommended that this list be reviewed periodically to take into account the advances in technology and changes in procurement practices, a recommendation that the ZC has continued to pursue. Main Committee II also urged all States to adopt the ZC's requirements for any nuclear cooperation with non-nuclear-weapon State not Party to the Treaty.

This message became even more relevant for the NPT States after adoption of the UNSCR 1540(2004) and appearance of international activities aimed at combating nuclear terrorism.

In autumn 2001, the ZC decided to launch an outreach with countries outside this committee. It has 3 objectives:

1. To build a strong and sustainable relationship between the ZC and third countries.
2. To increase the transparency of the activities of the ZC, by explaining its role, purpose and functions, in particular its role as technical interpreter of Article III, paragraph 2 of the NPT.
3. To provide opportunities for open dialogue on issues of common interest and concern on non-proliferation and nuclear export controls.

Mr. Chairman,

The Czech Republic is fully committed to the idea of non-proliferation. We are convinced that the Zangger Committee is one of the tools that can efficiently contribute to achieving Treaty's goals and objectives.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.