Abstract of the statement
by H.E. Ambassador VOLODYMYR YELCHENKO
"The experience of Ukraine on the way to HEU minimization"

As a Chair of Main Committee II of the 2010 NPT Review Conference and as a representative of Ukraine, the country that took a voluntary decision to get rid of all stocks of HEU, I would like to highlight the key aspects of the positive outcome of renouncement of the use of HEU.

First, we have acknowledged the implementation of decisions of the Nuclear Security Summit held in Washington in April 2010, which underlined the importance of nuclear security as an integral part of the development of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

The most valuable recent contribution of Ukraine to the course of non-proliferation and disarmament (not to mention our step at the beginning of the 1990s to renounce nuclear weapons based on our territory) was the decision announced by the President of Ukraine Viktor Yanukovych to get rid of all national stocks of highly enriched uranium by the time of the next Nuclear Security Summit in 2012.

Ukraine has already removed a substantial part of our stock for its downgrading to the low enriched uranium to be used by the Ukrainian nuclear research facilities and is ready to provide the participants of the upcoming Seoul meeting in March 2012 with the update on efforts taken to implement the Washington Nuclear Summit decisions.

In particular, under international control of the IAEA and provided with necessary technical and financial support, in 2010 Ukraine transported to the Russian Federation:

1. Recycled (spent) highly enriched nuclear fuel as well as highly enriched uranium and nuclear fuel from Kiev's Institute of Nuclear Research;
2. All fresh highly enriched nuclear fuel from Sevastopol's research reactor;
3. Highly enriched uranium from the National science centre "Kharkiv Physical and Technical Institute".

The total volume of exported nuclear materials from the territory of Ukraine in 2010 is 106 kilograms of highly enriched uranium.

Second, the application of any State of highly enriched nuclear materials sooner or later will cause suspicion of the international community about the purposes and the ways these materials are used. The reason for that is quite simple – because modern science can achieve absolutely painless abolition of the use of highly enriched nuclear materials with no harm to the research process.

In this regard a number of initiatives are aimed to facilitate multilateral solutions for the expanding need of minimizing the risk of proliferation. The main objective is to prevent "replication" of sensitive technologies around the world while ensuring the respect of legitimate rights of complying Parties to the NPT to develop nuclear power production. It is along these lines that we take the idea of the establishment of the IAEA Low Enriched Uranium Bank (LEU Bank).

This fuel bank is an important part of an equitable and sustainable international nuclear fuel cycle regime. It is fully in line with countries' rights to peaceful use of nuclear energy, and beneficial to energy security without distorting the existing fuel market - while at the same time furthering the goals of non-proliferation and a world free of nuclear weapons. The States should also note the economic expediency of this process.

Third, fighting nuclear terrorism remains one of the main challenges of the modern time. In this regard, we should bare in mind the security aspect of the rejection of highly enriched uranium and the materials of such nature. The fact of possession of such materials makes a country a potential object of an attack of terrorist organizations that are trying to acquire materials for a nuclear or "dirty" bomb. All States should equally bare their responsibility to

establish appropriate system and take necessary measures to prevent, detect and respond to malicious acts that involve nuclear materials.

In this regard, the international community makes a considerable emphasis on the leading role of the IAEA in the international nuclear security framework and the need to strengthen multilateral instruments that address nuclear security such as the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism.

I strongly believe that all countries, especially those that are planning to develop its own nuclear programme and introduce nuclear technologies for the first time should become contracting parties to the relevant international treaties and safety conventions without any delay.

Forth, the Chornobyl nuclear accident, as well as tragic events that took place at Fukushima Daiichi last year, have shown the need to foster the security of the Nuclear Power Plants worldwide. I would also like to underline the crucial need to minimize the theoretical threat of arising of emergency situations when dealing with nuclear materials, which are a source of potential threats to environment.

Last but not least I would like to mention that in our case, another practical result of renouncement of the use of HEU has become opening possibility to create necessary conditions to revive national nuclear science, providing favourable conditions for the scientists and adjusting the cooperation among the States in the sphere of peaceful use of nuclear energy.

In particular, thanks to the invaluable support given to Ukraine by the IAEA we have reached an important milestone in developing training and education facilities for nuclear security purposes at the Sevastopol National University, which became the partner of the Agency on the way of launching nuclear security education.