Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, I would like to express my delegation's congratulations on your election as chairman of the First Committee of the 60th Session of the General Assembly. We are confident that under your capable guidance we will be able to achieve significant results in our work.

Mr. Chairman,

Regarding non-proliferation and disarmament issues, which represent a pillar of the international security and peace, we attached particular significance to the 2005 United Nations Summit and Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference. It is unfortunate that NPT Review Conference concluded its work without being able to reach an agreement on a substantial final document. Let me join the previous speakers and express deep regret to the fact of lack of concrete measures and recommendations in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation in the outcome document of the 2005 World Summit.

Mr. Chairman,

As we are discussing disarmament and security, I would like to draw your attention to aggressive separatism as a major threat to international peace and security. Specifically, I would like to remind you about so-called “white spots”, namely the conflict zones in two secessionist regions of Georgia, that is Abkhazia and former autonomous region of South Ossetia/Tskhinvali Region. Both these regions are undergoing increasingly aggressive process of militarization. What is the most cynical, the separatist enclaves are receiving military shipments from our neighboring country, the Russian Federation, through the checkpoints along the Abkhazian and South Ossetian segments of Georgian-Russian border, controlled exclusively by Russian border guards. As a result, quite a substantial amount of arms and ammunition, which are not controlled by the state and consequently are not reflected in the records of the UN Register of Conventional Arms, have accumulated on these territories.

Just recently, on September 20, 2005, the South Ossetian separatists held a celebration of “independence” of the self-proclaimed republic of South Ossetia and a military parade. This event gave a display of military detachments and armoured vehicles, in particular 3 self-propelled howitzers (2S1), 4 tanks (T-55), 4 armoured personnel carriers (BTR-70), 3 armoured combat vehicles (BMP-2), 2 120 mm mortars and 3 anti-aircraft guns (EU-23-2).

We consider this as a violation of all peace agreements related to the conflict, as well as provisions and principles of CFE Treaty - a cornerstone of European security.

Despite the Russian Federation’s commitment to perform the role of principal mediator in the settlement of the conflict in former South Ossetia/Tskhinvali Region of Georgia, it continues to arm separatists, thus...
providing a fertile ground for illicit smuggling of arms, as well as proliferation of nuclear and other dangerous materials.

The very existence of separatist regimes, which basically are backed by Russian militaries and state institutions, gives an opportunity to acquire arms, ammunition and even weapons of mass destruction by terrorist groups.

We would like to once again underline, that the process of uncontrollable spread of armaments in thelawless territory represents a major threat to the stability of the entire region, first of all, because of their use by terrorists.

Everybody remembers terrorist attack of last year in Beslan. It is obvious that this tragic event could not happen, if the terrorists were stopped on the checkpoints that they passed unhindered numerous times on their way to Beslan. The only reason why they were not stopped and properly checked was their statement that they were heading to South Ossetia. This is a clear example of how supporting separatism has a boomerang effect and, in fact, turns to be a support of terrorism.

Another terrorist attack in town of Gori in Georgia was performed by criminals that were trained and equipped in former South Ossetia by Russian special services. We have all evidences to confirm that. Is not it clear that such a behavior is not only against my country, but first of all against Russia itself?

One more point of our major concern is the illegal presence of the Russian military base in Gudauta, on the conflict territory of Abkhazia, Georgia. This base has to be disbanded and withdrawn in at least ago as 2001. Despite the Istanbul commitments and current obligations undertaken by Russian Federation, this military base is still operating without consent of Georgia, providing arms and military expertise to the separatist regime.

In fact, what is happening in secessionist regions of Georgia is nothing less but annexation, which simply is assertion of effective control though political, economic and military means over the territory of another state.

Mr. Chairman,

Regrettably, these facts, as well as similar developments, which continually take place in the conflict zones on the territory of Georgia, are beyond the national and international disarmament and non-proliferation control mechanisms. But they still are the basic problems which this distinguished committee should handle!

In this regard, I would like to reaffirm full readiness of Georgia to cooperate with the international organizations. UN first of all, in elaborating and applying special mechanisms aimed at dealing with territories and regions, which are out of control of the state. Particular attention should be drawn to the supporters of these enclaves, would it be states, administrative regions, governmental institutions or private organizations.

Mr. Chairman,

We have raised these problems at this distinguished forum number of times during the former debates. Time and again, we repeat that the problems that we face could not be solved based on double standards. The provisions of international law, standards of interstate relations should not vary depending on size and military might of a particular state. They must be universal. Only then we can achieve the goal of security and stability worldwide.

And this is the main task of this very organization.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
October 7, 2005
UNGA 60 / FIRST COMMITTEE
GENERAL DEBATE

Statement by H.E. Mr. Armen MARTirosyan, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Armenia to the United Nations

Mr. Chairman,

Allow me first to join the others in congratulating you for your election as Chairman of the First Committee and through you the Bureau and assure you of my delegation’s full support for the successful outcome of our work.

Mr. Chairman,

This is the time to review the developments in the field of disarmament in the passing year. In this respect, an objective analysis for its inadequate outcome is paramount. Last year, during our discussions, we were hopeful that the 2005, which was rich in global events in the disarmament field, would become a memorable year that would help advance international peace and security even further. However, the year did not deliver to the full of our expectations. By looking back we see lost opportunities that could have elevated our discussions to a qualitatively different level. The NPT Review Conference did not produce any substantive outcome. Despite the tremendous effort put behind the UN Disarmament Commission, we were unable to agree on an agenda that would have enabled us to bring that body of utmost importance out of stalemate. Disarmament and non-proliferation, being fundamental pillars for international peace and stability, were left out of the Outcome Document of the 2005 Summit. Once again Armenia would like to thank the group of seven countries under the leadership of Norway for their initiative on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation to which Armenia was very supportive.

Mr. Chairman,

We would be remiss in not mentioning the significant results that 2005, however, did register:
- The International Convention on the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism was adopted, and Armenia was among those countries that signed it during the World Summit thus demonstrating once again its unwavering adherence to joint
efforts of the international community in combating terrorism. Now we have to work on its full and universal implementation.

- The positive outcome of the fourth round of the six-party talks on the Korean Peninsula nuclear problem just two weeks ago is very encouraging.

- The Security Council Resolution 1543 entered its implementation phase. Armenia has already presented its first report pursuant to the provisions of the resolution and is awaiting comments from the 1540 Committee.

- We successfully concluded the negotiations over the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons, which would become the next critical step in combating the illicit proliferation of those weapons that pose a grave threat to millions of civilians in different parts of the world.

Mr. President,

Once every session Armenia reports to this august body on the progress it has made in meeting its obligations under different international instruments in the field of disarmament. This year is no exception.

Despite the fact that Armenia is not a member of the Ottawa Convention due to security threats persistent in the region, we fully adhere to the goals and objectives of the Convention. Moreover, we have embarked on a de-mining project that allows freeing of mined territories for agricultural use. In this respect we would like to thank the US and the EU for their support to the Landmine Impact Survey carried out in Armenia in 2005 by the UNDP in cooperation with the Ministry of Defense. This is a three-year three-phased project that would allow reducing the social and economic impact of mines in Armenia.

Mr. President,

Transparency in disarmament is one of the reinforcing blocks of international peace and security. Armenia attaches great importance to transparency in armaments and military expenditures especially at a time of unprecedented increase of military budget by one of our neighboring states. Armenia has regularly reported under the relevant UN General Assembly resolutions and this year as well has presented its subsequent reports.

Mr. President,

My country has constantly declared its commitment to the principles of international treaties and conventions on the peaceful use of nuclear energy and of non-proliferation. As a neighboring country that has a great stake in the stability in our region, we closely follow the developments of the Iranian nuclear issue and hope that it would be resolved through mutually acceptable means deriving from principles of the international law.
On our part, besides the legislative reforms targeted at the upgrading of the safety and security of the Armenian Nuclear Power Plant and the verification regime, Armenia has signed the Final Act of the Amendments to the Convention on Physical Protection of Nuclear Material. The ratification of this document is currently underway.

Last year Armenia accepted the IPPAS (International Physical Protection Advisory Service) mission and we are awaiting its report by the end of this year. Another very important mission by the OSART (Operational Safety Assessment Review Team) will be hosted by the end of 2003 and hopefully, in cooperation with the IAEA, we will finalize the latter’s report with the relevant findings and recommendations in 2006. This year Armenia has also presented its report to the Third Review Meeting on the Convention of Nuclear Safety. Once again, Armenia would like to reiterate its commitment to continue to collaborate with the IAEA in a transparent and open manner.

Mr. President,

Armenia hopes that during the 60th Session of the General Assembly we will be able to collectively rise up to the challenges ahead and push the disarmament machinery out of stasis in order to more effectively address emerging global security threats to the benefit of increased and improved peace and security in the world. Armenia stands ready to bring its contribution to this effect.

Thank you.