CZECH REPUBLIC

Statement by

Mr. Hani Stolina

at the Thematic Discussion on Nuclear Weapons
of the First Committee of the 74th Session
of the General Assembly of the United Nations

New York, 22 October 2019
Mr. Chairman,

The Czech Republic is strongly committed to full implementation of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) in all its pillars, nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation, and the peaceful use of nuclear energy. NPT remains the cornerstone of the efforts to reduce the threat of nuclear disaster, of the international nuclear non-proliferation regime, the foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament and an important element in the future development of nuclear energy peaceful applications. We hope that the ongoing review cycle will result in a more robust and effective Treaty. Next year marks the 50th anniversary of the Treaty’s entry into force and the Czech Republic will do its best to make the 2020 Review Conference a success.

In our view, a process of gradual reduction of nuclear weapons, taking into account legitimate national and international security concerns, is the best approach to ensure sustainable progress in multilateral disarmament negotiations. However, progressive approach is the one that reflects political reality. The Czech Republic does not support the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, as it does not reflect the security situation in its complexity, has substantial technical and procedural shortcomings and risks undermining the NPT.

We encourage those States that have not yet signed or ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) to do so without delay. We would like to reaffirm our firm support to the universal adherence to and the entry into force of the CTBT, which will significantly strengthen the international security architecture in accordance with the NPT.

The Czech Republic is a steadfast supporter of the right to peaceful uses of nuclear energy exercised in a safe, secure and responsible manner, honouring non-proliferation obligations and safeguards agreements. In this regard, it is important to reaffirm the central role of the IAEA. We actively participate in and financially contribute to the Peaceful Uses Initiative under the auspices of the IAEA and we are convinced that responsible application of nuclear technologies can provide numerous benefit both in energy and non-energy applications, such as advancements in cancer therapy, disease control, food and water safety etc.

The Czech Republic strongly supports the IAEA’s efforts to strengthen the effectiveness and improve the efficiency of its safeguards system. Universal adherence to Comprehensive Safeguards Agreements and Additional Protocols will strengthen the non-proliferation regime and contribute to further enhancing international peace and security. We call on all remaining NPT States parties that have not yet done so to bring into force their Comprehensive
Safeguard Agreements and Additional Protocols as soon as possible and to fully cooperate with the IAEA.

The Czech Republic attaches great value to the role of export control regimes, the Nuclear Security Summit and its follow-up as well as relevant international initiatives and confidence building measures in non-proliferation, fostering nuclear security and building trust among all players. We call on those still outside this ever-growing system to adhere to norms and principles embedded therein.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.