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## **STATEMENT DATED 4 AUGUST 1993 BY THE GOVERNMENT OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION**

The attached text of the statement dated 4 August 1993 by the Government of the Russian Federation is being circulated for the information of Member States at the request of the Alternate Resident Representative of the Russian Federation.

## **STATEMENT BY THE GOVERNMENT OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION**

A number of steps have recently been taken by Kiev in order to establish control over the nuclear weapons which happened to be located in Ukrainian territory. On 2 July 1993 the Ukrainian Parliament approved a document entitled "The basic orientations of Ukraine's foreign policy", in which Ukraine declares itself to be the owner of these weapons. This action of Parliament was supported in subsequent public statements by the Ukrainian leadership. Ukraine's Ministry of Defence took a decision to incorporate the troops responsible for the storage and maintenance of nuclear armaments into the 43rd Missile Army, which is under its command. Thus Ukraine is establishing direct control over nuclear weapons.

In this connection, the Government of the Russian Federation considers it necessary to make the following statement.

This line taken by Kiev is a matter of concern to the world and will have very serious consequences for international stability and security and for the entire system of international relations.

By declaring itself the owner of nuclear weapons, Ukraine is violating its international commitments with regard to its non-nuclear status and is thereby directly challenging international law and order and propagating legal nihilism in international relations.

Kiev is in direct breach of a number of agreements concluded within the framework of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and, in particular, the decision of the CIS Heads of State of 6 July 1992 in accordance with which the Russian Federation alone among the successor States of the USSR is a nuclear-weapon State.

It is also in violation of the Lisbon Protocol to the START I Treaty, under which Ukraine undertook to accede in the shortest possible time to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) as a non-nuclear-weapon State. In the written statement which the Ukrainian side made on the occasion of the signing of this Protocol it is mentioned that "the right to possess and the burden of possessing the nuclear weapons of the former USSR are vested in the Russian Federation alone, with the explicit consent of Ukraine and all the other successor States of the former USSR". (IAEA Secretariat's translation).

Nor is Kiev's line consistent with its commitment regarding the transfer of nuclear weapons from its territory with a view to their dismantling and destruction by the end of 1994.

The existing regime of nuclear weapon non-proliferation based on the 1968 Treaty is being undermined, and the Treaty itself, whose fate is to be decided at the 1995 review conference, is in jeopardy. A dangerous precedent is being set which may be seized upon by countries at the threshold of possessing nuclear weapons.

The results of the many years of efforts made by the world community to achieve nuclear disarmament, and above all the START I and START II Treaties, are being torpedoed.

Since Ukraine does not have the appropriate physical, technical and technological infrastructure, its establishment of control over nuclear weapons greatly increases the risk from the standpoints of nuclear and ecological safety, for which the whole responsibility lies undoubtedly with Ukraine.

As the only successor State of the USSR with regard to the possession of nuclear weapons and as a depositary of the NPT, the Russian Federation cannot recognize as legitimate any claims or acts which run contrary to international agreements for the preservation and strengthening of the nuclear weapon non-proliferation regime. We call upon Ukraine to take all steps to ensure its strict observance of its non-nuclear status as provided for under international agreements, and to reconsider the above-mentioned decisions of its Parliament and Ministry of Defence about establishing control over nuclear weapons.

At the same time the Russian Federation expresses its readiness to continue its cooperation with Ukraine in ensuring nuclear and ecological safety of the nuclear weapons on the basis of the position set forth in the message of 30 April 1993 by President Yeltsin of the Russian Federation to the President of Ukraine.