

**Twenty years of renunciation of nuclear weapons from Ukraine :
Lessons learned and prospects of nuclear disarmament”**

**Round table organized
by the Permanent Representation of Ukraine to the UN
April 28, 2014**

**Intervention of Ambassador Jean-Hugues Simon-Michel,
Ambassador, Permanent Representative of France
to the Conference of Disarmament**

I would like to thank the mission of Ukraine for having organized this event, and for having invited me with such distinguished guests.

-On the first day of the NPT PrepCom, it is important to look at those important decisions that have paved the way to the non-proliferation regime, and Ukraine’s joining of the NPT in 1994 and its renouncement to nuclear weapons was an essential step for strengthening the Treaty.

1/Regarding the current situation related to the events in Ukraine, I’d like to remember some essential points:

-International law prohibits the acquisition by coercion or force of a portion or all of the territory of a State by another State.

-Such actions violate the principles on which the international system is based on.

-France has vocally condemned the illegal referendum that was held in Crimea in violation of the Constitution of Ukraine.

-My country has also condemned the illegal attempt by Russia to annex Crimea in evident contravention of international law and international obligations specific.

-As you know, we do not recognize any of these actions.

2/On the specific disarmament and non-proliferation issues related to the meeting we are having today, some elements deserve to be highlighted:

-In 1991, when Ukraine became an independent country, it inherited an important stockpile of nuclear weapons from the Soviet Union.

-Ukraine, however, took a historical decision by agreeing to join the Non Proliferation Treaty as a non-nuclear-weapon State, which meant to definitively abandon its nuclear arsenal.

-This is what we are commemorating today. It was an historical decision, a unique decision of its kind.

- On the occasion of this Ukrainian decision, the 3 depositary states of the NPT signed on December 5, 1994 the “Memorandum on Security Assurances in connection with Ukraine’s accession to the Non-Proliferation Treaty”, which we now call the Budapest Memorandum.

- As you may know, France is not a signatory to this Memorandum. It was signed between Ukraine and the three depositary states of the NPT (USA , UK and Russia).

- On the same day, France and China gave parallel statements – with similar assurances related to the respect of Ukraine’s independence, sovereignty territorial integrity and borders.

- It is our belief that in this crisis, Russia has acted in breach of its obligations under international law in general, but also in breach of its obligations under the Memorandum.

- This breach of the Russian obligations is of course a major concern in general but it is a major concern also with regard to the specific purposes we are dealing with in the NPT review cycle.

I was surprised that it was not mentioned so far by any delegation this morning. This question pertains to the real world. And the NPT review cycle should be able to address real world challenges.

Thank you.