I have taken the floor to explain Canada's vote in favour of the resolution entitled "The Risk of Nuclear Proliferation in the Middle East". It is important to ensure that our position is not misunderstood or misrepresented, and we will be vigilant in this regard.

The fundamental goal of resolution L.6 is to recognize that the proliferation of nuclear weapons in the Middle East would pose a serious threat to international peace and security, and to propose positive steps to be taken to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons in that region. Clearly, Israel's adherence to the Non-proliferation Treaty as a non-nuclear weapon state would be such a positive step. On that basis, Canada voted in favour of this resolution last year, and has done so again this year.

Nevertheless, it is incumbent upon all of the states in the Middle East to demonstrate an unequivocal commitment to nuclear non-proliferation. While we have voted in favour of resolution L.6 today, we are at the same time disappointed that it contains no reference to resolution GOV/2005/77 adopted by the IAEA Board of Governors on September 24, 2005 which found Iran to be in non-compliance with its safeguards obligations pursuant to the NPT. The long history of Iran's concealment of its nuclear activities, revealed as a result of two years of IAEA investigation, remains a matter of serious concern to Canada. We believe the reference in resolution L.6 to universal adherence to the NPT and full compliance with its obligations applies to all states, both those outside and those inside the Treaty.

In Canada's view, resolution L.6 could have been strengthened with the inclusion of a reference to Iran's non-compliance, accompanied by a call for Iran to comply fully with its international nuclear non-proliferation obligations and to cooperate fully with the IAEA in this regard.