United Nations General Assembly
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Explanation of Vote by
Ambassador John Freeman as Presidency
on behalf of the European Union

On the draft resolution on
“Strengthening of Security and Co-operation in the
Mediterranean Region“
L.47

New York, 25 October 2005

(Check against delivery)
Mr Chairman,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and the Acceding Countries Bulgaria and Romania, the Candidate Countries Turkey and Croatia*, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, as well as Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova who align themselves with this draft resolution “Strengthening of security and co-operation in the Mediterranean region”.

The European Union welcomes draft resolution L.47 which all member states have co-sponsored and which we hope will be adopted without a vote. The European Union attaches great importance to the issues of Security, Non-Proliferation and Disarmament in the Mediterranean region. As stated in the EU strategy against proliferation of weapons of mass destruction adopted by our leaders in December 2003, “security in Europe is closely linked to security and stability in the Mediterranean”. This draft resolution also recognises that prospects for closer Euro-Mediterranean co-operation in all spheres can be enhanced by positive developments world-wide, in particular in Europe, in the Maghreb and in the Middle East.

Amongst security issues of concern to Mediterranean countries we have taken particular interest in the areas of terrorism -the EU has proposed a Code of Conduct to combat illicit drug trafficking, organised crime and illegal human trafficking and called on Partners to both combat illegal immigration and to deepen dialogue with countries of origin and transit.

The Barcelona or Euromed process, launched in 1995, as the Mediterranean dimension of the EU’s external policy, has made a major contribution to the establishment and development of a global partnership between the European Union, its member countries and the Mediterranean partners. This partnership includes engagements regarding non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, disarmament, nuclear-weapon-free zones, verification, conventional weapons and confidence building measures. The European Union attaches particular importance to the goal of transforming the Mediterranean into a sea of peace, stability, co-operation and development, as well as, and above all, security. On the occasion of the 10th Anniversary of the Barcelona Declaration, the EU is looking forward to the launching of more action-oriented measures.

In the context of working towards strengthening security and stability in this crucial region, the EU warmly welcomes Libya’s decision to eliminate all material, equipment and programmes which lead to the production of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, together with the practical steps to implement this decision it has undertaken since. The case of Libya demonstrates that the problems of proliferation can, with good will, be tackled through discussion and engagement and that states have nothing to fear from coming forward and admitting non-compliance.

The European Union calls on all state of the Mediterranean region that have not yet done so, to accede to all the multilaterally negotiated legally binding instruments in the field of
disarmament and non-proliferation, in order to strengthen peace and co-operation in the region.

I thank you Mr Chairman.