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Statement by

H.E. Ambassador José Júlio Pereira Gomes,
Portugal, on behalf of the European Union

On the draft resolution A/C.1/62/L.48

'Strengthening of security and cooperation in the Mediterranean region'

New York, 30 October, 2007

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Mr. Chairman,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union on draft resolution L. 48 'Strengthening of security and cooperation in the Mediterranean region'.

The Candidate Countries Turkey, Croatia¹ and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia¹, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia, and the EFTA countries Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia align themselves with this declaration.

Mr. Chairman,

The European Union welcomes the draft resolution L.48 that all members States have co-sponsored and that we expect 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 recognized by the UN General Assembly and as stated in the EU Strategy against Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction adopted by the European Council in December 2003, security in Europe is closely linked to security and stability in the Mediterranean, as well as to international peace and security.

The EU welcomes the inclusion in this draft resolution of the necessity of combating terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, including the possible resort by terrorists to weapons of mass destruction.

In the context of working towards strengthening security and stability in this crucial region, the EU reiterates its satisfaction with 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, undertaken by the Libyan Government.

Mr. Chairman,

The EU attaches particular importance to the goal of transforming the Mediterranean into a Sea of peace, security, stability, co-operation and development.

We would like to recall that 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 EU, its members States, and the Mediterranean partners.

This partnership includes engagements regarding non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, disarmament, zones free of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems, verification, conventional weapons, confidence building measures and the fight against terrorism.

¹ Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.
We seize this opportunity to highlight a number of important events contributing to the strengthening of security and co-operation in the Mediterranean region.

We welcome the adoption of the Euro-Mediterranean Code of Conduct on countering terrorism, at the Euro-Med Summit held in Barcelona in November 2005, and all the steps taken since then for its implementation.

We also welcome the Euro-African Ministerial Conference on Migration and Development held in Rabat in July 2006 and the EU-African Ministerial Conference on Migration and Development held in Tripoli in November 2006, as opportunities for strengthening co-operation in the Mediterranean region on all aspects of migration and development, including the challenges associated with illegal immigration.

Next month Euro-Med partners will meet in Portugal at ministerial level to hold a comprehensive, integrated and balanced discussion on the issues related to migration. This upcoming Euro-Med ministerial meeting on migration will be a good opportunity to underline the added value of a regional cooperation framework.

This November will also see the newly established Parliamentary Assembly for the Mediterranean meet for the first time in Malta which will launch a new dimension of political dialogue and understanding in the Mediterranean affairs at Parliamentary level. The Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean shall address, among other things, issues of common concern to foster and enhance further confidence between Mediterranean States so as to ensure regional security and stability and to promote a culture of peace.

We welcome the fact that the 8th MSP on the Convention on the Prohibition of use, stockpiling, production and transfer of anti-personnel Mines and on their destruction will be held in Jordan this November.

Mr. Chairman,

The EU reiterates its call to all States of the Mediterranean region that have not yet done so to accede to all multilaterally negotiated legally-binding instruments in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation, in order to strengthen peace and co-operation in the region.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.