STATEMENT

On behalf of the European Union

by

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in the Nuclear Weapon Cluster
of the General Assembly First Committee

United Nations
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- CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY -
1. I speak on behalf of the European Union. The Candidate Country the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate Serbia as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia, align themselves with this statement.

2. Despite the renewed positive momentum in global arms control, international security continues to be compromised and threatened, both globally and regionally, by the proliferation of nuclear weapons and their means of delivery, as well as the risk that non-State actors gain access to such weapons.

3. The European Union welcomes the important resolution 1887 adopted by the Security Council on 24 September.

4. The EU is committed to work to strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation regime. The NPT remains the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime, the essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament in accordance with its Article VI and an important element in the development of peaceful uses of nuclear energy. We must preserve and strengthen its authority and integrity. The EU will continue to promote all the objectives contained in the Treaty. The EU reiterates its call on all States not yet Party to the NPT to join the Treaty as non-nuclear-weapon States. The EU continues to support the Decisions and the Resolution adopted by the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference and the Final Document of the 2000 NPT Review Conference, and shall bear in mind the current situation.

5. The EU warmly welcomes the fact that the third session of the Preparatory Committee of the 2010 NPT Review Conference managed to take the necessary procedural decisions. While much work remains before consensus on the outcome for the 2010 Review Conference can be successfully built, the constructive atmosphere of the PrepCom session gave us some reason for optimism.

6. At the PrepCom the European Union presented its vision for the 2010 review cycle and made concrete proposals to this end. The current review cycle should help us reaffirm the sense of common purpose and create a more secure international context by expressing full support for the NPT’s goals and obligations, by addressing the main issues at stake within all three pillars of the Treaty and by demonstrating the capacity to give appropriate responses to the current challenges. A balanced approach to the three pillars is essential. The 2010 Review Conference should adopt a set of concrete, effective, pragmatic and consensual measures for stepping up international efforts against proliferation, pursuing disarmament and ensuring a responsible development of peaceful uses of nuclear energy by countries wishing to develop their capacities in this field.

7. To achieve these goals, the EU has presented a set of forward-looking proposals on all three pillars of the NPT, to be part of an action plan adopted by the Review Conference.

* The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia continues to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process
8. In the area of non-proliferation, the EU has proposed inter alia:
- resolute action in response to proliferation crises, in particular in Iran and the DPRK;
- determination of the consequences of a State Party’s non-compliance with NPT non-proliferation obligations, in particular with its safeguards agreement;
- universalisation and strengthening of the IAEA safeguards system, in particular through the adoption and implementation by States which have yet to do so of the comprehensive safeguards agreements together with the Additional Protocol, which constitute the current verification standard;
- improvements in nuclear security and physical protection of nuclear materials;
- strengthening of export controls, also through assistance to third countries in this regard;
- cooperation to develop multilateral schemes as viable and credible alternatives to the development of exclusively national enrichment and reprocessing capabilities, without prejudice to the rights in accordance with Article IV of the NPT;
- adoption of national criminal sanctions against acts of proliferation, including proliferation financing;
- development of proliferation-resistant and safeguards-friendly technologies.

9. The European Union recalls the disarmament initiatives, endorsed by our 27 Heads of State and Government, which we submitted to the UN General Assembly in 2008, and continues to encourage the international community to promote in particular:
- the universal ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty and the completion of its verification regime, and the dismantling as soon as possible of all nuclear testing facilities in a manner that is transparent and open to the international community;
- the opening without delay and early completion of the negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, on the basis agreed in CD/1864, and the introduction of an immediate moratorium on the production of such materials, as well as the dismantlement of facilities dedicated to the production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons;
- the establishment of transparency and confidence building measures by the nuclear powers;
- early completion of the negotiations between the United States and Russia on a legally binding post-START agreement, and an overall reduction in the global stockpile of nuclear weapons in accordance with article VI of the NPT, in particular by the States which possess the largest arsenals;
- the inclusion of tactical nuclear weapons, by those States which have them, in their general arms control and disarmament processes, with a view to their reduction and elimination;
- the start of consultations on a multilateral treaty banning short and intermediate range ground-to-ground missiles;
- the adherence to and implementation by all to the Hague Code of Conduct;
- and in addition, continuing to stress the need for general disarmament, mobilisation in all other areas of disarmament.
10. The European Union has equally ambitious proposals in the area of peaceful uses of nuclear energy, for example:
- assisting countries to plan and assess their energy needs;
- assuring a responsible development of nuclear energy in the best safety, security and non-proliferation conditions;
- supporting IAEA assistance programs and the IAEA nuclear security fund;
- support efforts to train the skilled workforce required to ensure a responsible development of peaceful uses of nuclear energy under the best safety, security and non-proliferation conditions;
- encouraging States to join all the relevant major nuclear conventions;
- promoting responsible management of spent fuel and nuclear waste;
- actively promoting multilateral approaches to the nuclear fuel cycle, including our decision to financially support the initiative to launch an IAEA Nuclear Fuel Bank with up to 25 million euro, once the conditions and modalities have been approved by the IAEA Board of Governors.

11. The EU has also proposed that the NPT Review Conference establishes a framework for dealing with the consequences of any decision to withdraw from the Treaty. A withdrawal could constitute a serious threat to international peace and security, in particular if taken by a State Party in violation of the Treaty.

Mr Chairman,

12. The international non-proliferation regime faces major challenges. We shall continue to pursue resolute action in response to them.

13. The European Union strongly condemned the test of a nuclear explosive device carried out by the DPRK on 25 May 2009, as well as the launch of a long-range missile in April 2009, which constituted clear breaches of the UN Security Council resolutions 1695 and 1718. Such actions undermine the stability of the Korean Peninsula and represent a threat to international peace and security. The EU strongly urges the DPRK to refrain from any further such activities, as well as from any launch using ballistic missile technology, to renounce its nuclear weapons programme and to return to the Six-Party Talks, aiming at the denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula. The EU calls on the DPRK to return to compliance with the NPT and the IAEA safeguards obligations, as well as not to pursue any proliferation sensitive exports. The EU fully supports resolution 1874 and calls for its swift and robust implementation. The letter sent by the DPRK to the UN Security Council on 4 September 2009, which strives to challenge the implementation of resolution 1874, contains further provocations to the international community.

14. Iran, like any other State party to the NPT, has the inalienable right to develop and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, but the international community has to be sure that Iran complies with its obligations under the NPT and its safeguards agreement. Iran’s clandestine nuclear activities, including the construction of a covert uranium enrichment facility in Qom, the composition of its nuclear programme, in particular the pursuit of enrichment activities in defiance of UNSC resolutions and its refusal to effectively
cooperate with the IAEA in all respects have cast serious doubt on the exclusively peaceful nature of its nuclear programme. We stress that Iran has the responsibility to restore international confidence in this regard. We urge Iran to follow up the meeting in Geneva on 1 October with concrete measures, including giving full transparency on the Qom project. Iran’s nuclear and ballistic missile activities constitute a substantial threat to regional and international security. The EU reaffirms its unequivocal support for efforts to find a negotiated long-term solution to the Iranian nuclear issue within the framework of UN Security Council resolutions 1696, 1737, 1747, 1803 and 1835. The EU urges Iran to fully comply with all these resolutions and to fully cooperate with the IAEA by providing the Agency such access and information that it has requested. The EU remains firmly committed to a dual track approach. We call on Iran to work seriously with the international community in a spirit of mutual respect in order to find a negotiated solution that will address Iran’s interests as well as the international community’s concerns. The evolution of our relations with Iran will depend on it.

Mr Chairman,

15. Credible assurances that States are honouring their non-proliferation obligations are indispensable components of the NPT regime. The EU emphasises the essential role of the IAEA in monitoring States’ fulfilment of their nuclear non-proliferation undertakings. The EU expresses its sincere appreciation to Director General ElBaradei for his successful tenure at the helm of the IAEA and congratulates his successor Ambassador Amano.

16. The EU remains fully committed to the fight against nuclear terrorism and supports all measures designed to prevent terrorists from acquiring WMD, their means of delivery or connected materials. In particular UNSC resolution 1540 plays a crucial role in this respect and we call on all States to pursue full implementation and application of its obligations, as well as assist others to do so. The EU is encouraged by the US initiative regarding a new international effort to secure all vulnerable nuclear material around the world and is ready to work towards that aim. We reiterate our support to the G8 Global Partnership, the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism (GICNT), the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) and the Financial Action Task Force (FATF).

17. The EU reaffirms its commitment to strong and internationally coordinated export controls to complement our obligations under the NPT. We support the further strengthening of the Nuclear Suppliers Group. The EU also supports the NSG’s and the Zangger Committee’s outreach activities.

Mr Chairman,

18. The EU attaches the greatest importance to the entry into force as soon as possible of the CTBT and the completion of its verification regime. The CTBT is crucial to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. The EU salutes the new momentum towards further ratifications created by the announcement of President Obama that the US administration
will immediately and aggressively pursue US ratification. The EU will spare no effort in promoting the early ratification of the Treaty by the few remaining Annex 2 States.

19. The EU warmly welcomes the decision in the CD earlier this year to open the negotiations of a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons, in accordance with CD/1864. Such a treaty is long overdue and its successful conclusion would constitute a significant contribution to nuclear disarmament efforts. While the subsequent delays in the actual start of the negotiations are profoundly disappointing, the EU trusts that all CD Member States will engage constructively in these negotiations, as well as in the substantive work on the other issues included in the Programme of Work, when the CD resumes its work in January 2010.

20. Pending the entry into force of an FMCT, the EU calls on all States concerned to declare and uphold an immediate moratorium on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. We also call on all States concerned to dismantle their facilities dedicated to the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons.

21. The EU is committed to the pursuit of nuclear disarmament and the final objective enshrined in Article VI of the NPT. We welcome the considerable reduction in strategic and non-strategic nuclear weapons and delivery systems since the end of the Cold War, in particular by two EU Member States. We stress the need for an overall reduction of the global stockpiles of nuclear weapons, especially by those States with the largest arsenals. In this context, we recognise the application of the principle of irreversibility to guide all measures in the field of nuclear disarmament and arms control, as a contribution to establishing and upholding international peace, security and stability, taking these conditions into account. The EU welcomes the increased transparency shown by some nuclear-weapon States on the nuclear weapons they possess in particular by two EU Member States and calls on others to do likewise.

Mr Chairman,

22. Positive and negative security assurances can play an important role in the NPT regime and can act as an incentive to forego acquisition of weapons of mass destruction. The European Union is committed to promoting further consideration of security assurances.

23. The EU continues to attach great importance to the development of internationally recognized nuclear-weapon-free zones, established on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among States of the regions concerned, as elaborated in the guidelines adopted by the UNDC in 1999. We hope that outstanding issues concerning some nuclear-weapon-free zones can be resolved through consultations, in accordance with the UNDC guidelines and with the agreement of all parties involved.
24. The EU remains committed to the full implementation of the resolutions on the Middle East adopted by the Security Council and by the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference. The EU calls on all States of the region to establish an effectively verifiable zone free of nuclear weapons, as well as other weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery. All States of the region that have not yet done so, should accede to the NPT and to the conventions banning biological and chemical weapons, and conclude with the IAEA a comprehensive safeguards agreement and an additional protocol. Regional confidence building measures are needed. In this context, we recall our proposal presented in May this year to hold a seminar on Middle East Security, WMD non-proliferation and disarmament prior to the 2010 NPT Review Conference.

Mr Chairman,

25. Serious threats and challenges remain and we must face them with resolve. However, we note with satisfaction the growing momentum for progress towards achieving the goals enshrined in the NPT. The EU calls on all States to seize this opportunity and work together to make the world a safer place.

Thank you.