L.3: The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East

Explanation of vote

Statement by Dell Higgin
Ambassador for Disarmament

26 October 2010

As delivered
Mr Chairman

New Zealand has voted ‘yes’ on resolution L.3 entitled ‘The risk of proliferation in the Middle East.’ Consistent with our belief in the goal of a nuclear-weapons-free world, New Zealand is a strong and longstanding supporter of the universalisation of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. We are committed to the realisation of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, as mandated by the States Party to the NPT in 1995 and reaffirmed by the 2010 Review Conference, and we strongly support the 2010 Review Conference’s decision to convene a Conference in 2012 on the establishment of the zone. The IAEA will have a crucial role to play in verifying such a zone; we therefore urge all states that have not yet done so – including in the Middle East – to sign, ratify and implement an Additional Protocol to allow the Agency to undertake its important work.

New Zealand wishes, however, to place on the record our concern regarding the absence in this resolution of any reference to other states in the Middle East which present significant nuclear proliferation concerns. We would hope that this lack of balance will be able to be addressed in future years.