Explanation of Vote on the draft resolution on
"Risk of Nuclear Proliferation in the Middle East" (L.2),
delivered by Dr. Cezary Lusiński,
Head of Delegation of the Republic of Poland to the Conference
on Disarmament in Geneva,
at the UN General Assembly First Committee
on behalf of the Member States of the European Union

United Nations

New York

26 October 2011

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY
Mr. Chairman,

I am speaking on behalf of the Member States of the European Union on draft resolution L.2 entitled “The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East”. The Candidate Countries Croatia*, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, Montenegro* and Iceland**, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, and the EFTA country Norway, a member of the European Economic Area, as well as Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova, align themselves with this declaration.

Mr. Chairman,

We intend to vote in favour of this draft resolution. The EU has always been fully committed to the establishment in the Middle East of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction, nuclear, chemical and biological, and their delivery systems. Therefore 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 Conference. In addition, the EU supports the mechanism, as agreed by the 2010 NPT Review Conference, for the implementation of the 1995 NPT Resolution on the Middle East. We support in particular the convening by the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the co-sponsors of the 1995 NPT resolution, in consultation with the States of the region, of a conference in 2012, to be attended by all states of the Middle East, on the establishment of a Middle East Zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at by the states of the region, and with the full support and engagement of the nuclear weapons States. In this respect the EU very much welcomes the recent nomination by the UNSG and the co-sponsors of the 1995 NPT resolution of Mr Jaakko Laajava as facilitator and Finland as the host government for the Conference. The EU is prepared to strongly support the process towards the establishment of a WMD free zone in the Middle East, including through possible follow-up initiatives to our successful seminar, which we held in July 2011. Furthermore, we call on all states in the region, which have not yet done so, to accede to the NPT, to the conventions for the prohibition of chemical and biological weapons, as well as to sign and ratify CTBT, and to conclude with the IAEA comprehensive safeguards agreements and an Additional Protocol.

Mr. Chairman,

We regret that this resolution is not sufficiently comprehensive in that it does not address all the nuclear proliferation challenges in the region.

This resolution does not mention the serious proliferation risks related to Iran’s nuclear and ballistic programme. By violating its safeguards agreement with the IAEA, by continuing not to comply with UNSC Resolutions and IAEA Board of Governors resolutions, by limiting its cooperation with the Agency, Iran has raised serious doubts in the international community about the exclusively peaceful nature of its nuclear programme. We noted with grave concern the recent developments of the Iranian nuclear programme as reflected in the latest IAEA report, in particular Iran’s installation of centrifuges in its facility near Qoms as part of plans to increase the capacity to enrich uranium to near 20%. We also share the increasing concerns of the Agency on the possible military dimension of the Iranian nuclear programme.

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* Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Montenegro continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.
** Iceland continues to be a member of the EFTA and of the European Economic Area.
According to the Agency, these concerns are based on extensive, credible and consistent information. In its latest Resolution of 9 June 2010, the UN Security Council reaffirmed that Iran must suspend enrichment-related activities and cooperate fully with the IAEA on all outstanding issues.

We remain determined and united in our efforts to work towards a comprehensive, negotiated, long-term solution which restores international confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme, while respecting Iran's legitimate right to the peaceful use of nuclear energy consistent with the NPT. In this regard, we reaffirmed the need for Iran to - fully implement the UNSC and IAEA Board of Governors Resolutions and to co-operate fully with the IAEA in satisfactorily addressing all its concerns, including those on possible military dimensions to its nuclear programme, as reflected in IAEA reports.

We deeply regret that Iran has failed to respond, over the past year, to concrete and practical proposals for initial confidence building measures made by the EU High Representative on 22 January 2011 in Istanbul, on behalf of China, France, Germany, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States. We once again urge Iran to respond to Ms. Ashton's declaration of 21 September 2011 made on behalf of these countries.

With regard to Syria, the European Union has noted with serious concern the conclusion of the IAEA Director General in his May report to the Board of Governors "that the destroyed building at the Dair Alzour site was very likely a nuclear reactor." The EU urges Syria as required by the resolution of the IAEA Board of Governors, which reported to the UN Security Council Syria's non-compliance with its obligations under its Safeguards Agreement, to urgently remedy that non-compliance, and fulfil its May 26 pledge to the Director General by responding positively and without delay to the Director General's request, resolving all outstanding questions and bringing into force an Additional Protocol as soon as possible.

Thank you.