EU Statement

By

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at the

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United Nations

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- CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY -
Mr. Chairman

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The Acceding country Croatia*, the candidate countries the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, Montenegro*, Iceland* and Serbia*, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina, the EFTA country Liechtenstein, member of the European Economic Area, as well as Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova, align themselves with this statement.

1. Let me first of all congratulate you, Mr Chairman, for taking up this very important post and assure you that we will fully support you in your efforts to achieve a successful outcome of this session.

Mr. Chairman,

2. We warmly welcome the progress that has been made in the field of disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation; particularly the momentum created by major events such as the entry into force of New START Treaty last year, the successful NPT Review Conference in 2010 and this year's first session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 NPT Review Conference. At the same time we continue to be deeply concerned at the persistent impasse for over a decade in the Conference on Disarmament, thereby preventing it from fulfilling its mandate and in particular its failure to start negotiations on an FMCT.

3. The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, and the risk that non-state actors, in particular terrorists, gain access to such weapons, continues to be a major threat to international peace and security that calls for a global approach, in addition to actions at the national and regional levels. Likewise the unregulated trade in conventional arms, and the illicit trade and excessive accumulation of small arms and light weapons adversely affect regional and international security and stability, fuel conflicts and armed violence and threaten the lives of individuals.

4. Arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation, together with confidence and transparency, are vital aspects of collective security. The European Union has long stressed the need for a comprehensive approach to all these issues that require to be strengthened by the international community.

5. Effective multilateralism, prevention and international cooperation are the three main goals of the EU Strategy against the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction. The EU promotes universal adherence to and full implementation of all non-proliferation and disarmament treaties and conventions, not only through diplomatic means and initiatives, but also through practical training and assistance. The EU is a major donor to international organisations in this field providing support to dozens of countries. We also want to support and reinforce verification mechanisms, so as to ensure full compliance with international obligations. This enhances mutual confidence and ensures the credibility of disarmament and non-proliferation treaties and conventions. The EU reaffirms the role of the UNSC as the final arbiter of international peace and security, including in cases of non-compliance.

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* Croatia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

+ Iceland continues to be a member of EFTA and the European Economic Area.
Mr. Chairman,

6. The Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons remains the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation system, the essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament in accordance with its Article VI and an important element in the further development of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The EU emphasises the importance of universalizing the NPT and calls on States that have not yet done so to join the Treaty as non-nuclear weapon states.

7. The EU is actively contributing to the global efforts to seek a safer world for all and to the achievement of peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons in accordance with the stated objectives of the NPT. In that context, the EU welcomed the outcome of the NPT Review Conference in May 2010 and the consensus established on the Action Plan and the other measures contained in its Final Document. This outcome has strengthened the international nuclear non-proliferation regime by setting ambitious goals on all three pillars of the Treaty and by endorsing other concrete measures, including on the Middle-East. In this regard we welcome the Nuclear Weapons States follow-up meetings to the NPT Review Conference in Paris (2011) and Washington (2012) as well as initiatives of Non-Nuclear Weapons States like the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative promoting the implementation of the 2010 Action Plan, which is our common roadmap to the 2015 Review Conference. The first session of the NPT Review Conference’s Preparatory Committee, which met in Vienna in May this year, paved the way for a smooth start of the new NPT Review Cycle.

8. The EU welcomed the reaffirmation by the 2010 NPT Review Conference of the 1995 NPT Resolution on the Middle East and the endorsement of practical steps leading to the full implementation of that resolution. We welcomed the appointment of the Under-Secretary of State Jaakko Laajava of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland as facilitator and the designation of Finland as the host government for the 2012 Conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. We welcomed also the Report of Facilitator Laajava presented during the first session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Review Conference of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. As announced at this year’s NPT PrepCom, the EU is pleased to confirm that it is finalizing preparations for a seminar following the same lines of our previous initiative, that will be held in Brussels on 5-6 November, and would allow for an open exchange of views among the participants on all aspects related to the creation of a WMDFZ in the Middle East.

9. The international community continues to be faced with major proliferation challenges, which must be addressed in a resolute way in order to maintain the credibility and effectiveness of the NPT regime. Iran’s nuclear and missile programmes and the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea’s (DPRK) testing of a nuclear explosive device and delivery mechanisms and recent information on a uranium enrichment programme are the two most worrying examples in this regard. The same can be said regarding Syria’s non-compliance with its Safeguards Agreement and continued non-cooperation with the IAEA, which remain to be addressed by the UNSC.

10. International concerns about the exclusively peaceful nature of the Iranian nuclear programme prevail and resulted in the adoption of the most recent IAEA Board of Governors’ resolution on Iran on 13 September. It urges Iran to comply fully and without delay with all its obligations under relevant UNSC resolutions and to meet the requirements of the IAEA Board of Governors, thereby deciding that Iran’s cooperation on all outstanding
issues, including those pointing to possible military dimensions, is essential and urgent to restore international confidence. The EU's objective remains to achieve a comprehensive negotiated long-term settlement. The E3+3 - China, France, Germany, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States - led by the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign and Security Policy - remain firm, clear and united in seeking a swift diplomatic resolution of the international community's concerns on the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme, based on the NPT, and the full implementation of UN Security Council and IAEA Board of Governors resolutions. Clear and credible proposals have been laid out in recent months for an initial confidence building step which will address the immediate key concerns focussing on Iran's 20% enrichment activities in a comprehensive manner as well as reciprocal steps that would benefit Iran. We urge Iran once again to engage seriously and to urgently take the necessary steps that will allow to restore confidence.

Mr. Chairman,

11. The EU calls for the strengthening of the multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation regime and for revitalizing relevant international instruments. Within this context, we remain deeply troubled by the apparent dysfunction of a crucial part of the disarmament machinery: the ongoing stalemate in the Conference on Disarmament. For the European Union, launching negotiations on a Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty (FMCT) is more important and urgent than ever. In the meantime, the EU calls on all concerned States that have not yet done so to declare and uphold an immediate moratorium on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons. The EU continues to urge the last remaining State to join consensus in adopting a Programme of Work, which, inter alia, will enable negotiations on an FMCT. We consider the blockage of the CD unacceptable. It seriously undermines the principle of multilateral cooperation. The EU reaffirms once more its commitment to engage in substantive discussions on all the core issues on the CD agenda. By the same token, the EU calls on the CD to consider the question of the enlargement of its membership.

12. The Conference on Disarmament, in accordance with the mandate it received from the SSOD-I, should be the place to forge multilateral treaties. However, given the continuing stalemate in the CD, the international community needs to reflect on options and, if necessary, identify other ways to ensure progress. We are ready during this session to engage with you, Mr Chairman, and with all UN member states, in particular on the proposals the EU presented during the last year's HLM debate as well as to consider other options to overcome the deadlock in the CD or - to put it more broadly - to revitalize the multilateral disarmament machinery to take multilateral non-proliferation and disarmament forward.

Mr. Chairman,

13. The European Union continues to promote the universalisation and full implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention and we will carry on providing significant support to the OPCW for meeting those goals. The EU welcomes the outcome of the Ministerial Meeting on Chemical Weapons Convention on 1 October 2012 at the occasion of the 15th anniversary of the Convention and looks forward to achieving substantial progress during the 3rd CWC Review Conference in April 2013.

14. The EU welcomes the outcomes of the 7th Review Conference of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention, namely the adoption of the new sustained agenda for the inter-sessional process until 2016 and of other decisions facilitating the implementation and strengthening of the Convention.
15. The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty is of crucial importance to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, which was also underlined in the Joint Ministerial Statement of the CTBT Ministerial Meeting on the early entry into force of the Treaty, held on 27 September 2012. We call on all States that have not yet done so, in particular the remaining Annex II States, to ratify the Treaty at an early date. We welcome the latest ratifications by the Central African Republic, Trinidad and Tobago, Ghana, Guinea, Guatemala, and Indonesia as an Annex II state. In the meantime, the EU continues to provide significant support for the CTBTO Provisional Technical Secretariat to strengthen the verification system.

16. The EU stresses the need to do everything possible to prevent the risk of WMDs falling into hands of terrorists, in particular the risk of nuclear terrorism. The EU emphasises the essential role of the IAEA in this context, particularly through the Nuclear Security Fund, to which the EU makes significant contributions. We also welcome the outcome of the High level meeting on countering nuclear terrorism organised during the Ministerial Week on 28 September 2012 by the Secretary General and the Counter Terrorism Implementation Task Force.

17. We reaffirm our support for the G8 Global Partnership, the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism, the Nuclear Security Summits, the Proliferation Security Initiative, the Global Threat Reduction Initiative and the Financial Action Task Force. At the same time, we stress the need for compliance with obligations under United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1540 and 1887 and call for improved nuclear security for highly radioactive sources.

Mr. Chairman,

18. Strengthening the security of activities in outer space is another key priority for the European Union. In this spirit, the European Union officially launched on 5 June 2012 in Vienna the multilateral diplomatic process to discuss and negotiate its initiative for an International Code of Conduct for Outer Space Activities – a political framework, which is absolutely compatible and complementary with other existing initiatives.

19. The proliferation of missiles with potential to deliver weapons of mass destruction constitutes a threat to international peace and security as underlined in UNSCR 1540, 1887 and 1977. The EU is concerned about the ongoing missile programmes in the Middle East, North-East Asia and South Asia, including Iran and the DPRK. The EU fully supports the MTCR. We continue to promote universal adherence to, strengthening of and full implementation of the Hague Code of Conduct which is the only multilateral instrument regarding missile proliferation. Our proposal to start consultations on a treaty banning short and intermediate range ground-to-ground ballistic missiles capable of delivering WMD remains valid.

20. We continue to be seriously concerned by the devastating effects of the unregulated trade in conventional weapons and their diversion to the illicit market. We were therefore disappointed that the negotiations on the Arms Trade Treaty were inconclusive last July. We are disappointed, but we are not discouraged. Together with others, we will continue to support the completion of negotiations of an ATT at the final UN Conference in early 2013, based on the draft submitted by the president of the Conference on July 26, aiming both at regulating the legal trade and preventing the illegal one. Our aim is a strong, robust and effective legally binding international instrument, setting the highest common international
standards for the regulation of the international trade in arms, and that enjoys the support of all the relevant stakeholders.

21. At the same time we are pleased that the Review Conference on UN Programme of Action on SALW was able to agree on an outcome and to reaffirm UN Member States' commitment to its implementation. We are confident that the results of the Conference will enable us to fight the spread and misuse of illicit SALW more effectively.

Mr Chairman,

21. The EU will work together with all interested countries to uphold and strengthen the authority of the United Nations.

Thank you, Mr Chairman.