EU WP Nuclear Weapon Free Zone Treaties Statement (NPT/CONF.2010/PC.II/WP.23)

1. I have the honour to take the floor on behalf of the European Union.

2. I would like to avail myself of this opportunity to introduce the Working Paper on Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaties that the EU submitted on 30 April 2008. This paper was distributed as Conference Document NPT/CONF.2010/PC.II/WP.23.

3. The European Union recalls that the NPT is based on three mutually reinforcing pillars: non-proliferation, disarmament and the peaceful use of nuclear energy. With regard to non-proliferation and disarmament, the European Union attaches 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 its 1999 substantive session. Effective nuclear weapons free zones enhance regional and global peace and security and are a means to promote nuclear disarmament, stability and confidence.

4. The European Union recognises the continuing high value of the existing legally binding security assurances, provided for by the protocols to the Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone treaties and the unilateral declarations of nuclear weapon states, noted by United Nations Security Council Resolution 984 (1995), and reaffirmed at the 2000 NPT Review Conference, to non-nuclear weapon States Parties to the NPT on the use of or threat of use of nuclear weapons. Positive and negative security assurances can act as incentives for other states to abstain from acquiring nuclear weapons.

5. Signature and ratification by the nuclear weapon states of the relevant protocols to the treaties establishing Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones, following completion of the necessary consultation, is welcomed and encouraged by the European Union. We hope that outstanding issues concerning Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone treaties and their protocols, such as the issues surrounding the Central Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone and the Southeast Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone, can be resolved through consultations in accordance with UNDC guidelines and with the agreement of all parties involved.

6. With regard to Article VII of the NPT, the European Union believes that Decision No. 2 of the 1995 Extension and Review Conference and the Outcome Document of the 2000 NPT Review Conference, reaffirms the need for the establishment of additional Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones, especially in regions of tension.

7. The establishment of a mutually agreed and verifiable zone in the Middle East free of all nuclear weapons, as well as other Weapons of Mass Destruction and their means of delivery is regarded by the European Union as a means of enhancing security and stability in the region. The European Union remains committed to and recognises the importance of implementing of the resolution on the Middle East (NPT/CONF.1995/32/RES/1) adopted at the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference.

8. The European Union recalls the resolutions regarding "the risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East" and the "Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East" (UNGA Resolutions 62/56 and 62/18). However, the EU continues to emphasise the serious concern of the international community over Iran's nuclear program and Iran's failure to comply with the subsequent United Nations Security Council Resolutions (1696, 1737, 1747, and 1803).

9. The European Union welcomes the global increase in Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones and stresses the importance of the principles of verification and universality with respect to their international recognition. This Preparatory Committee could therefore reiterate the guidelines as outlined in the 1999 UNDC substantive session and which are summed up in the Working Paper.