

Mr. Chairman,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union on draft resolution L. 11 entitled "Promotion of Multilateralism in the area of Disarmament and Non-Proliferation". The Candidate Countries Bulgaria, Romania, Turkey and Croatia*, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro, and the EFTA countries Iceland and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, align themselves with this explanation of vote.

Mr Chairman,

As stated in the EU Strategy against proliferation of weapons of mass destruction as adopted by the European Council last year, the EU is committed to the multilateral treaty system, which provides the legal and normative basis for all non-proliferation efforts. It is the EU's conviction that a multilateralist approach to security, including disarmament and non-proliferation, provides the best way to maintain international order and hence our commitment to uphold, implement and strengthen the multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation treaties and agreements. The EU policy is to pursue the implementation and universalisation of the existing disarmament and non-proliferation norms.

Unfortunately, draft resolution L.11 contains a number of elements, both in the preambular and operative paragraphs, which the European Union cannot support.

As last year these elements in question are of a serious nature, and we have again brought to the attention of the sponsors our concerns and views on this subject and have provided suggestions as to how the draft could be improved. We must conclude that our fundamental concerns have not been taken into account and that the draft resolution retains language that makes it unbalanced.

The European Union believes that unilateral, bilateral, and multilateral actions in disarmament and non-proliferation can bring and have brought to positive results. Amongst other documents, the final document of the 2000 NPT review conference itself recognises this. Draft resolution L.11 does not give sufficient credit to such measures.

It is for these reasons that we are not in a position to support this resolution. We remain committed to multilateral approaches in the areas of arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation and continue to recognise their importance.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

* Croatia continues to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process