

New York, 26 October 2004

Mr. Chairman,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union on draft resolution L. 6 entitled "Missiles". 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 country Norway, member of the European Economic Area, align themselves with this explanation of vote.

Mr. Chairman,

1. The European Union has decided to abstain on this draft resolution on missiles, as was the case last year.
2. Let me underline that our abstention must not be regarded as a lack of commitment on this issue. On the contrary, the EU is convinced that proliferation of ballistic missiles capable of delivering weapons of mass destruction puts at risk the security of all states and peoples. Development by several countries of concern of programmes of autonomous capacity in the production of medium and long range ballistic missiles capable of delivering weapons of mass destruction, as well as cruise missiles and UAV, are a growing cause of concern within the EU.
3. The EU welcomes the International Code of Conduct against ballistic missile proliferation which was successfully launched in November 2002 in the Hague and which has up to now been subscribed by 117 States. Unfortunately, the draft resolution tabled by Iran does not make any specific reference to the Code.

Mr Chairman

4. Last year, at the voting on the previous resolution, the EU stated that we were "not convinced that another panel of governmental experts, as proposed by the resolution under consideration, to assist in the preparation of a report on the issue of missiles in all its aspects, is an efficient next step". The EU remains of the opinion that a panel of experts would only be meaningful based on an agreed specific mandate which ensured that added value could be offered.
5. We take note of the co-sponsors' proposal that the Secretary-General produce a report, taking into account the views of member States before a new panel is convoked. This shall include views already expressed. It is difficult to imagine that the unchanged mandate of the third panel established by this resolution will this time lead to a positive outcome in the form of agreed conclusions. However, the EU will approach the issue constructively.
6. These are the reasons, Mr Chairman, why the EU is not in a position to support the draft resolution.

I thank you Mr Chairman.

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