

**JOINT EXPLANATION OF VOTE: DRAFT RESOLUTION
(L20): NUCLEAR WEAPON FREE SOUTHERN
HEMISPHERE AND ADJACENT AREAS**

Madam Chair,

I am speaking on behalf of France, the United Kingdom and the United States.

Last year, as in previous years, our three delegations voted against this draft resolution. We note that the draft resolution's preamble recalls the applicable principles and rules of international law relating to the freedom of the high seas and the rights of passage through maritime space, including those of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. We welcome the acknowledgement of that important point; we do not want those principles and rules to be affected.

In essence, however, we continue to believe it is contradictory to propose simultaneously an area that would be composed largely of the high seas and yet to say that it would not apply to the high seas. We question, therefore, whether the real goal of this draft resolution is in fact the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone covering the high seas. We do not believe that this ambiguity

has been sufficiently clarified. For that reason, we voted against the draft resolution again this year.

We would like to emphasise that we attach great importance to the development of internationally recognised new nuclear-weapon-free zones, which could make an important contribution to regional and global security, provided they are supported by Nuclear Weapon States and all States of the region concerned, are the subject of appropriate treaties, including general assurances provided by the International Atomic Energy Agency and were satisfactorily concluded in consultation with the Nuclear Weapon States as set out in the 1999 UNDC guidelines.