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Finland's EU Presidency

United Nations General Assembly
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First Committee

Explanation of Vote by
Ambassador Kari Kahiluoto, Finland,
on behalf of
the European Union

on the draft Resolution on
"Missiles"

New York, 23 October 2006

Madam Chair,

I am speaking on behalf of the European Union on draft resolution L. 3 entitled "Missiles". The Acceding Countries Bulgaria and Romania, the Candidate Countries Turkey, Croatia* and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, and the EFTA countries Iceland and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, align themselves with this declaration.

Madam Chair,

The European Union is not in a position to support this draft resolution on missiles.

Let me underline that this must not be regarded as a lack of commitment on the 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 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. In this regard we regret that this text does not mention the relevant resolutions adopted this year by the UN Security Council.

The EU supports the International Code of Conduct against ballistic missile proliferation which was successfully launched in 2002 in the Hague and which has up to now been subscribed by 125 States. The draft resolution under consideration does not make any specific reference to the Code.

The EU was not in a position to support the resolution under consideration when it was last tabled in 2004, as we had concerns regarding the effectiveness of the steps proposed in it.

We note that the Third Panel of Governmental Experts on Missiles is to begin its work in 2007. We consider it important that the work of the Third Panel be based on the work done by the two previous Panels and in particular the nearly-completed final report of the Second Panel. We would not like to see the Third Panel to repeat work already done.

These are the reasons, Madam Chair, why the EU is not in a position to support the draft resolution.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

* Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.