

**Explanation of Vote
on draft resolution on “Measures to prevent terrorists from acquiring
weapons of mass destruction” contained in document A/C.1/62/L.22**

Mr. Chairman,

We support the objective of the resolution although we continue to believe that its language could have been improved to convey a more objective reflection of reality.

The fear that terrorist and non-State actors may acquire and use WMD is a recent phenomenon. However, this danger must be viewed in perspective. Terrorist organizations, or non-State actors, are more likely to acquire and use CW and BW capabilities. The acquisition and use of nuclear weapons by terrorists and non-State actors is much less likely. This concern should not become an excuse for discrimination against ‘selected’ countries.

The international community must however not lower its guard to prevent the possibility of development and use of “dirty bombs”. Increased international cooperation including initiation of negotiations on a Radiological Weapons Convention should be given serious consideration.

As regards denial of means to terrorists to acquire, possess and use of WMDs, it is necessary for all States to enact and enforce national physical protection and export control measures to prevent WMD technology from falling into the hands of terrorists. International assistance and capacity building are areas requiring urgent attention. To lend greater legitimacy to international efforts in this area, interim measures such as the adoption of UNSC resolutions 1540 and 1673 which were designed to “fill the gap” in international law need to be taken up by a more inclusive and representative UN forum. We agree with the widely held view that the best guarantee against the threat of possible use of nuclear, chemical or biological weapons is in their elimination.

Faithful implementation of existing treaty regimes such as CWC can effectively address most of these threats. An early disarmament of chemical stocks would enhance the confidence level against the likelihood of their acquisition and use by terrorists. However, as long as the process of chemical weapons disarmament proceeds at a slow pace and huge quantities

of chemical weapons exist, the possibility of their falling into terrorist hands shall remain as well.

Control of Biological Weapons should be of more concern particularly to the industrially advanced States due to the extensive use of biological agents by them. The Biological Weapons Convention should therefore be strengthened, in particular, by reviving the BW Verification Protocol which was negotiated over 8 years. We are convinced that a revival of that process would fully serve the goal of promoting international peace and security as well as address the concerns expressed, for example, in this resolution.

We are convinced that a comprehensive strategy must be evolved to prevent the possibility of terrorists gaining access to WMDs, which must include a) depriving terrorist organizations of their operational and organizational capabilities, b) strengthening of the relevant existing multilateral regimes, c) negotiating a universal treaty to fill the gaps in current international instruments d) augmenting States capacity to implement global treaty obligations and e) addressing the root causes of terrorism. A distinction must be maintained between counter-terrorism and non proliferation.

This resolution quite appropriately mentions the Final Document of the Fourteenth NAM Summit as having expressed itself on the issue of weapons of mass destruction and terrorism. We would like to remind that in the context of the issue of terrorism, the same document also stresses the need to address the causes which sometimes lead to terrorism; causes that lie in suppression, injustice and deprivation.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman