



PORTUGAL 2007

UNITED NATIONS
62nd Session of the General Assembly
First Committee

Explanation of vote by
H.E. Ambassador José Júlio Pereira Gomes,
Portugal, on behalf of the European Union

On the draft resolution A/C.1/62/L.2
'The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East'

New York, 30 October, 2007

Please check against delivery

Mr. Chairman,

I am speaking on behalf of the European Union on draft resolution L2 entitled "The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East".

Mr. Chairman,

The EU will vote in favour of this draft resolution and calls on all States in the region to adhere to the NPT as non-nuclear-weapon States. We also call on all States in the region that have not yet done so to conclude the Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement and to sign and ratify the Additional Protocol.

The European Union supports the objective that the Middle East becomes a zone free of all weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, but we are concerned that this draft resolution does not cover some relevant developments with respect to nuclear proliferation in the region.

Indeed, the adoption of Security Council Resolutions 1696, 1737 and 1747 reflects the international community's profound concerns over Iran's nuclear programme. We deplore Iran's continued failure to comply with the resolutions of the UNSC and of the IAEA Board of Governors and we are greatly concerned by its defiance of the International Community by continuing uranium enrichment related activities. Such a step directly contradicts the repeated requests of the IAEA Board of Governors, made mandatory by the Security Council Resolutions. We appreciate the IAEA Secretariat's continuous efforts to resolve the long standing issues relating to Iran's nuclear programme.

The EU welcomes the agreement between Iran and the IAEA to resolve all questions concerning Iran's past nuclear activities. The EU notes that full and timely implementation by Iran of the IAEA work plan, as interpreted by the Director's General report, would constitute a significant step forward. Confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme requires that the IAEA be able to provide assurances regarding the absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities, through the implementation of the Additional Protocol and required transparency measures. We urge Iran to cooperate fully in implementing the work plan in a complete and swift manner and with a constructive spirit to assist the IAEA in its efforts by providing all access required by its Safeguard Agreement and by implementing the Additional Protocol and open the way for negotiations by complying with the requirements as set out in resolutions 1696, 1737 and 1747.

The European Union supports the statement on Iran issued on 28 September 2007 in New York, by the Foreign Ministers of China, France, Germany, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States with the support of the High Representative of the EU which, inter alia, welcomed the agreement between Iran and the IAEA to resolve all questions concerning Iran's past nuclear activities. Moreover we note that the Ministers agreed, in view of the fact that Iran has not fulfilled the requirements of SC resolutions 1696, 1737 and 1747, including the suspension of its enrichment-related and reprocessing activities, to finalize a text for a third UNSC Sanctions Resolution under article 41 of the Charter of the UN with the intention of bringing it to a vote in the UNSC, unless the November reports of Dr. Solana and Dr. El Baradei show a positive outcome of their efforts.

The EU remains committed to seeking a negotiated solution that would address the international community's concerns and allow Iran to develop a domestic nuclear industry for peaceful purposes. The EU recalls the talks held to this effect in Rome on October 23rd by HR Javier Solana. A solution to the Iranian nuclear issue would contribute to global non-proliferation efforts and to realizing the objective of a Middle East free of weapons of mass destruction, including their means of delivery.