

October 31, 2008

EXPLANATION OF VOTE

Draft Resolution L. 30 “Toward a nuclear-weapon-free world: accelerating the implementation of nuclear disarmament commitments”

Mr. Chairman,

Although my delegation voted against this resolution, our vote in no way detracts from the firm commitment of the United States to the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT). As President Bush said on the occasion of the Treaty’s 40th anniversary on July 1, the United States strongly supports the Treaty and is committed to working diligently to strengthen it further. We remain firmly committed to continued compliance with our own obligations under the NPT.

The United States voted “no” because it believes the resolution does not fully reflect the need to address all important elements of the NPT, including nonproliferation and cooperation on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Also, the United States does not support the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and believes that some elements of the documents agreed upon at the 1995 and 2000 Review Conferences have been overtaken by events.

Despite this vote, there are many elements in the resolution that the United States strongly supports. It supports universality of the NPT, including North Korea’s return at an early date to the Treaty and to its IAEA safeguards agreement. The United States also supports the Resolution on the Middle East adopted at the 1995 Review Conference and is working with states within and outside the region to implement it.

We agree that it is important that NPT Parties intensify their constructive engagement in the work of the Preparatory Committee for the 2010 Review Conference, including identifying and addressing specific aspects of the Treaty where urgent progress is required. We agree on the need for a constructive and successful review process that should help strengthen the Treaty in all its aspects and achieve its full implementation and universality. As it has in the past, the United States has been engaging its fellow NPT Parties for these purposes, including here in New York in these past few weeks, and will continue to do so.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.