Statement on behalf of the European Union

By

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UN General Assembly Resolution on the Report of the IAEA

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- CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY -
Mr. President,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The Candidate Countries Turkey, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Iceland and Serbia, the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate Albania, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia, align themselves with this statement.

We are pleased to support the Resolution on the Report of the International Atomic Energy Agency, a report which again reaffirms the 'indispensable role of the Agency with regard to the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, and in assisting the development and practical application of atomic energy for peaceful uses, as well as in technology transfer and in nuclear verification, safety and security'.

Mr President,

The EU is committed to effective multilateral action against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and attaches the utmost importance to universalizing the NPT. We call on States that have not yet done so to join the Treaty as non-nuclear weapon states. Furthermore, the EU is actively contributing to global efforts to seek a safer world for all and to create the conditions for a world without nuclear weapons in accordance with the goals of the NPT, in a way that promotes international stability and based on the principle of undiminished security for all. We underline the vital importance of non-proliferation for achieving these goals.

The EU is fully supportive of the Action Plan adopted at the 2010 Review Conference of the NPT and would like to reiterate its commitment to the establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction, ever since the Barcelona Declaration of 1995. We therefore regret that the Conference on the establishment of such a zone, due to take place in 2012, was postponed. The EU fully supports the on-going preparations for a successful Conference and in particular the tireless efforts of its Facilitator, Ambassador Laajava of Finland. The EU calls on all States in the region to urgently and proactively engage with the Facilitator and the Co-Conveners with the aim of convening the Conference as soon as possible, on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at by the States of the region.

The 2010 NPT Review Conference reaffirmed the role of the IAEA in verifying and assuring the compliance by States with their safeguards obligations and stressed the importance of resolving all cases of non-compliance and of States Parties responding resolutely and effectively in such cases. The EU is deeply concerned with the protracted and serious challenges to the non-proliferation regime posed by the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) and the Syrian Arab Republic.

*The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

* Iceland continues to be a member of EFTA and the European Economic Area.
The EU would like to stress again that the United Nations Security Council, as the final arbiter of international peace and security, has the mandate to take appropriate action in the event of non-compliance with NPT obligations, including safeguards agreements.

The Agency's system of safeguards is a fundamental component of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and plays an indispensable role in the implementation of the NPT. The measures contained in the Model Additional Protocol form an integral part of the IAEA Safeguards system and Comprehensive Safeguards Agreements together with Additional Protocols constitute the current IAEA verification standard. The EU calls for their universalisation without delay. From the beginning, the EU has firmly supported the continued evolution of safeguards to a State-level concept (SLC), that is more objectives-based and that considers all safeguards relevant information about a State. This approach enables the Agency to focus its efforts on areas of greater safeguards significance and there where the concerns of diversion of nuclear materials are the greatest. Furthermore, the EU is grateful for the wide support received from the IAEA Member States for the EU-sponsored resolution on 'Strengthening the Effectiveness and Improving the Efficiency of Agency Safeguards'.

Mr. President,

The EU attaches importance to the highest standards for nuclear safety being implemented and continuously improved in the EU and promoted internationally. In this context, the EU and its Member States call on all IAEA Member States, which have not yet done so to become contracting parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety, the Conventions on Notification and Assistance, and the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management without delay. In addition, we encourage IAEA Member States to implement the Agency's Action Plan on Nuclear Safety, in particular to use all relevant peer review services of the IAEA to improve nuclear safety. In this respect, a Memorandum of Understanding on Nuclear Safety Cooperation was signed during the IAEA General Conference on 17 September 2013 by IAEA DG, Yukiya Amano, and the EU Commissioner for Energy, Günther Oettinger.

Mr President,

In the framework of its strategy against the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction, the EU is actively supporting UNSCR 1540 and UNSCR 1887 as well as a number of other international initiatives, such as the G8 Global Partnership, the Proliferation Security Initiative, the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism, and the Global Threat Reduction Initiative. The nuclear security summits laid an important groundwork aimed at strengthening nuclear security, reducing the threat of nuclear terrorism and securing all vulnerable nuclear material in the coming years. Strengthening nuclear security requires a continuing effort, political will and global coordination and the EU remains committed towards these goals. Out of €260 million dedicated to Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) risk mitigation worldwide, more than € 100 million has been allocated to the EU's regional CBRN Centres of Excellence Initiative.
The EU strongly supports IAEA activities in the areas of nuclear security and was pleased to participate in the IAEA International Conference on “Nuclear Security: Enhancing Global Efforts” on 1-5 July 2013 as a cooperating organisation. The EU is among the main contributors to the Nuclear Security Fund, having provided around €30 million from EU funds to date, in addition to voluntary contributions, in funds and in kind, made individually by some of its Member States, to the benefit of around 100 countries. We will continue to provide such support. Last month, the EU made a new decision to support that Fund with an additional amount of more than €8 million.

Effective Physical Protection is of the utmost importance to prevent nuclear material falling into the hands of terrorists, and to protect nuclear facilities against unauthorised use and malicious acts. The EU therefore urges all States that have not yet done so, to become party to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (CPPNM) and its 2005 amendment.

Finally, Mr. President,

The European Union attaches the utmost importance to the Agency’s Technical Cooperation Programme and the role of the Agency in the responsible development of the peaceful applications of nuclear energy. The EU supports both the IAEA, and cooperation with third countries, in this area, with a total amount of some €150 million per year. As further support to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, the EU has allocated around €560 million over the period 2007 – 2013 for the promotion of nuclear safety, radiation protection and the application of efficient and effective safeguards of nuclear material in third countries.

I thank you, Mr. President.