EU Statement

By

H.E. Mr. Ioannis Vrailas
Deputy Head of Delegation
Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations

at the

69th Session of the
UN General Assembly First Committee
Thematic Discussion on Nuclear Weapons

United Nations
New York
20 October 2014

- As delivered-
I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union.

The Candidate Countries the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Iceland and Albania, the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the EFTA country Liechtenstein, member of the European Economic Area, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia, align themselves with this statement.

1. For the EU, the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) is the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime, the essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament in accordance with Article VI of the NPT and an important element in the further development of nuclear energy applications for peaceful purposes.

2. We reaffirm our full support to all three pillars of the Treaty and to the implementation of all commitments assumed under it or undertaken during previous Review Conferences. The EU will continue to promote full implementation of the 2010 Action Plan, which includes concrete steps on nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy and which is our common roadmap towards the 2015 Review Conference (RevCon) when the implementation of the 2010 Action Plan across all three pillars will be assessed. Ensuring the implementation of the 64 actions in the Action Plan is a collective responsibility shared by all States Parties to the NPT without exception. Looking forward, we are committed to working with all States towards a successful conclusion and substantial outcome to the 2015 RevCon as we work during the period ahead to 2020, when the NPT will reach its fiftieth anniversary. We reaffirm the importance of universalizing the NPT and call upon States that have not done so to join the Treaty as non-nuclear weapon states and, pending their accession, to adhere to its terms.

3. The EU remains committed to the pursuit of nuclear disarmament, in accordance with Article VI of the NPT. The EU welcomes the encouraging steps taken by the United States and two European Union member States. States with the largest arsenals have a special responsibility to reduce their stockpiles. The EU recalls that all States parties are committed to pursue policies that are fully compatible with the Treaty and the objective of achieving a world without nuclear weapons. The EU also recalls the commitment of the five nuclear weapon States to accelerate concrete progress on the steps leading to nuclear disarmament, in a way that promotes international stability, peace and undiminished and increased security and encourages them to continue their meetings, started in 2009, on all three pillars of the NPT, including confidence-building, transparency, verification and discussions on reporting and on the implementation of the commitments they made at the 2010 NPT Review Conference.

4. With reference to the implementation of the New START Treaty, the EU encourages Russia and the United States to seek further reductions in their nuclear arsenals, including strategic, non-strategic, deployed and non-deployed weapons. The EU also encourages them to include non-strategic nuclear weapons in the next round of their bilateral nuclear arms reduction, while agreeing on the importance of further transparency and confidence-building measures in order to advance the nuclear disarmament process. The EU would welcome further bilateral voluntary reductions by them as a contribution to the full implementation of

---

1 The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.
2 Iceland continues to be a member of the EFTA and of the European Economic Area.
Article VI as a standing treaty obligation upon all NPT States.

5. The EU strongly condemns the violation of several commitments by the Russian Federation to refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or sovereignty of Ukraine under the Budapest memorandum of 1994 on security assurances in connection with Ukraine’s accession to the NPT as a non-nuclear weapon State. We express our concern about the possible consequences of further deterioration of the international context on disarmament efforts.

6. The five nuclear weapon States submitted their reports on the implementation of the 2010 Action Plan to the Third Session of Preparatory Committee for the 2015 NPT Review Conference. Although the reports differ in quality, range and completeness of information, we consider the reporting as a step forward and an important contribution to the delivery on the 2010 action plan. We call on states that have not done so yet, to report to the review conference.

7. The EU also welcomes the signature by the five nuclear weapon States of the Protocol to the Central Asia Nuclear Weapons Free Zone Treaty in the margins of the Third session of the Preparatory Committee of the 2015 NPT RevCon this year.

8. The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) is of crucial importance to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation and its entry into force and universalization remain top priorities for the EU. We will continue to promote this objective though our diplomatic and financial engagement. Pending the entry into force of the Treaty, the EU calls on all States, including the DPRK, to abide by a moratorium on nuclear weapon test explosions or any other nuclear explosion, to refrain from any action that would defeat the object and purpose of the Treaty. We reiterate our call on all States that have not yet done so, in particular those listed in Annex 2 of the Treaty, to sign and ratify it.

9. The EU reiterates its call for the immediate commencement and early conclusion of the negotiation in the Conference on Disarmament of a Treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, on the basis of document CD/1299 and the mandate contained therein. This remains a clear priority. We call on all states possessing nuclear weapons that have not done so to declare and uphold an immediate moratorium on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. We welcome the constructive discussions at the two meetings in 2014 of the Group of Governmental Experts (GGE). We are looking forward to the last two sessions to be held in 2015 and hope that the GGE will lay the ground for future negotiations.

10. The world continues to face major proliferation threats to international peace and security: they must be addressed in a resolute way in order to maintain the credibility and effectiveness of the NPT regime.

11. The EU has condemned, in the strongest possible terms, the DPRK's nuclear test of February 2013, as well as the DPRK's threat of another nuclear test and has urged the DPRK to refrain from further provocative actions. The February 2013 nuclear test was another blatant challenge to the global non-proliferation regime and an outright violation of the DPRK's international obligations, in particular under UN Security Council Resolutions 1718, 1874 and 2087. We once again urge the DPRK to abandon its nuclear weapons programme, including its uranium enrichment programme and the ongoing activities at the Yongbyon site, in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner. We call on the DPRK to return to full
compliance with the NPT and to comply with all its international obligations fully, unconditionally and without delay.

12. The EU fully supports the ongoing diplomatic efforts led by the High Representative, together with China, France, Germany, the Russian Federation, the UK and the US to seek a diplomatic solution with Iran to the Iranian nuclear issue. The EU welcomes the Joint Plan of Action (JPA) between Iran and the E3/EU+3, and the Framework for Cooperation between Iran and the IAEA and that Iran continues to implement the measures under the JPA. It is essential and urgent that Iran cooperates fully with the Agency regarding Possible Military Dimensions. The EU underlines that resolving all outstanding issues will be essential to achieve a comprehensive, negotiated long-term settlement, which is the EU’s objective. It is vital that Iran engages fully with the IAEA to resolve all outstanding issues in order to build international confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of the Iranian nuclear programme. The EU is deeply concerned that the Agency is unable to provide credible assurances about the absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities in Iran, and therefore is not able to conclude that all nuclear material in Iran is in peaceful activities.

13. The EU fully supported the adoption of the resolution of the Board of Governors of 9 June 2011, which reported Syria's non-compliance with its Safeguards Agreement to the UN Security Council and the General Assembly. The EU deeply regrets that Syria has still to remedy its non-compliance by cooperating as a matter of priority and transparently with the Agency to resolve all outstanding issues, and by signing, bringing into force and implementing in full an Additional Protocol as soon as possible. The European Union would like to thank the Director General for his latest report on the implementation of the NPT Safeguards Agreement in the Syrian Arab Republic.

14. The EU continues to strongly support the outcome of the 2010 NPT Review Conference on the Middle East and remains fully committed to the establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems in the Middle East. We regret that it has not been possible so far to convene a Conference on the establishment of such a zone to be attended by all States of the region. We continue to fully support the ongoing preparations and commend the Facilitator, Ambassador Laajava of Finland and his team for their tireless efforts in this regard. We find the series of informal meetings in Switzerland encouraging. The EU calls on all States in the region to urgently and proactively engage with the Facilitator, the co-convenors and each other with the aim of convening the Conference as soon as possible, on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at between the States of the region.

15. The European Union stresses the need to do everything possible to prevent the risks of weapons of mass destruction, nuclear or other radioactive material falling into the hands of terrorists. The EU participates in or contributes to initiatives such as the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI), the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism (GICNT) and the Nuclear Security Summits (NSS) process.

16. The 2010 NPT Review Conference expressed its deep concern at “the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons” and its reaffirmation of “the need for all States at all times to comply with applicable international law, including international humanitarian law”.

17. A variety of perspectives are being contemplated on the subject of humanitarian consequences. EU Member States will take national decisions on participation in the conference on this subject to be organized by Austria on 8-9 December 2014.