FIFTY-SEVENTH SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

FIRST COMMITTEE

draft resolution L.14

"Effects of the use of depleted uranium in armaments"

Support statement
By
H.E. Ambassador Erling Harild Nielsen
on behalf of the European Union

NEW YORK
October 25, 2002

Check against delivery
Mr. Chairman,

It is my honour on behalf of the European Union to speak on the draft resolution L.14 entitled "Effects of the use of depleted uranium in armaments". The countries of Central and Eastern Europe associated with the European Union – Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia and the associated countries – Cyprus, Malta and Turkey as well as the EFTA countries of the European Economic Area – Iceland and Norway align themselves with this explanation of vote.

Mr. Chairman,

The European Union has decided to vote against this draft resolution on the effects of the use of depleted uranium in armaments. Two overall considerations have led to this position.

Firstly, we can by no means subscribe to the second paragraph of the draft resolution which qualifies depleted uranium as a weapon of mass destruction.

Secondly, regarding the fourth preambular paragraph we reiterate that international organisations such as the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) have carefully examined the issue of possible pathological effects of the use of depleted uranium in armaments. They have concluded that at this stage there is no evidence that depleted uranium in armaments has a notable impact either with regard to pathology or with regard to the environment.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.