FIFTY-SEVENTH SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

FIRST COMMITTEE

Draft resolution L.30

"Prevention of an arms race in outer space"

Support statement

By

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

NEW YORK
October 22, 2002

Check against delivery
Mr. Chairman,

It is my honour on behalf of the European Union to speak on the resolution L.30 entitled “Prevention of an arms race in outer space”. 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 EU has voted in favour of the resolution on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, but in order to avoid any misunderstanding we deem it necessary to clarify the rationale of our vote.

We want to reiterate that the Conference on Disarmament is the only international multilateral negotiating forum for disarmament. Therefore, it is within the CD that any decision should be taken regarding work on the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

The EU stands ready to support the establishment of a subsidiary body at the CD to deal with this matter on the basis of a mandate, which will be subject of an agreement by all. We wish to recall, however, that the negotiation at the CD of a non-discriminatory and universal treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devises (FMCT) constitutes a priority for the EU.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman