EU Statement

By

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- Check against delivery -
I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union.

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania\textsuperscript{1}, Bosnia and Herzegovina\textsuperscript{2}, Iceland\textsuperscript{3}, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia align themselves with this statement.

Let me first of all congratulate you, Mr Chairman, for taking up this important post and pledge our full support. It gives us great pleasure to see a representative of an EU Member State presiding over the proceedings of the First Committee of the UN General Assembly.

I would like to start by reaffirming the EU's commitment to treaty-based nuclear disarmament and arms control and the promotion of universal adherence to and full implementation of all non-proliferation and disarmament treaties and conventions.

I would like to refer to recent positive developments underlining the importance of effective multilateralism and international cooperation.

The EU welcomes the historic agreement of 14 July between the E3/EU+3 and Iran on a Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), in full conformity with the principles of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). On the basis of United Nations Security Council resolution 2231 (2015) and the JCPOA, the EU fully supports the IAEA's long term mission of verification and monitoring of Iran's nuclear related commitments for the full duration of these commitments. Its full and sustained implementation, which will be facilitated by the application and subsequent necessary ratification of the Additional Protocol to Iran's Safeguards Agreement, as foreseen in the agreement will provide the international community with the necessary assurances on the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme and will contribute positively to regional and international peace and security.

The EU also looks forward to the full and timely implementation of the "Roadmap for the clarification of past and present outstanding issues regarding Iran's nuclear programme" agreed on 14 July between the IAEA and Iran. It is important that Iran cooperates fully with the Agency regarding Possible Military Dimensions, as agreed in the roadmap. The EU underlines that resolving all outstanding issues will be essential for implementing the JCPOA.

The Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) is a landmark instrument which provides for robust and effective common international standards for the regulation of the international trade in conventional arms, making it more responsible and transparent and reducing the illicit trade of arms. Importantly, the ATT introduces the concept of serious acts of Gender Based Violence as a factor to take into account when making export assessments.

The EU warmly welcomes the successful outcome of the First Conference of States Parties to the ATT in Cancun in August this year. The Conference took important substantive and operational decisions including workable rules of procedure, sound financial and management rules, clarity on the seat of the Secretariat and the appointment of its interim Head. These

\textsuperscript{1} Candidate Countries. The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.
\textsuperscript{2} Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate.
\textsuperscript{3} EFTA country and member of the European Economic Area.
decisions provide solid foundations for a functioning ATT regime. It is our collective responsibility to preserve this momentum for the considerable work ahead towards increased transparency, effective implementation and universalization.

We are looking forward to the extraordinary meeting of States Parties, to be held in Geneva in early 2016 to decide on budgetary issues and consider for adoption the draft proposal on the administrative arrangements concerning the newly established ATT Secretariat. We are also looking forward to the next Conference of States Parties in Geneva in 2016 to concentrate on the substantive work.

The European Union regards the NPT as 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. A key priority for the EU is to uphold and preserve the NPT as a multilateral instrument for reinforcing international peace, security and stability. It is important to universalize the NPT: the EU calls upon States that have not yet done so to join the Treaty as non-nuclear weapon states.

While regretting that it was not possible to reach consensus on a final document at the 2015 Review Conference and bearing in mind the current severe security environment, we reiterate the European Union's strong support for all three pillars of the Treaty and call for the implementation of all commitments assumed under it or undertaken during previous Review Conferences.

The EU reaffirms its support for the Resolution on the Middle East adopted by the 1995 Review and Extension Conference and recalls the affirmation of its goals and objectives by the 2000 and the 2010 Review Conferences. We consider the 1995 Resolution valid until its goals and objectives are achieved. The EU deeply regrets that the conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems has not been convened. We maintain the view that dialogue and building confidence among all stakeholders is the only sustainable way to agree arrangements for a meaningful conference, to be attended by all States of the Middle East on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at by them as decided by the 2010 Review Conference. We also wish to record our appreciation to Ambassador Jaakko Laajava for his hard work and unstinting efforts as Facilitator.

Recent reports of use of chlorine as chemical weapons in Syria reinforce the calls for a resolute and global approach to that threat. We stand united in condemning, in the strongest terms, all use of chemical weapons in Syria or anywhere else, by anyone and under any circumstances, which constitutes a violation of international law, a war crime, and a crime against humanity. There can be no impunity and perpetrators of these horrific attacks must be held accountable.

The international community over the last year cooperated effectively and acted promptly in carrying out the destruction of Syria's declared chemical weapons stockpile, in line with UN Security Council Resolution 2118 and the decisions by the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) Executive Council. The removal and ongoing destruction of the declared Syrian chemicals and of the remaining Production Facilities constitute a significant step towards the necessary complete and irreversible dismantling of the Syrian chemical weapons programme. The EU contributed 17 million euros for the joint UN/OPCW Plan for
the destruction of Syria's chemical weapons. In addition, several EU Member States made important financial and other contributions to support the plan and gave in-kind assistance for the removal, the transportation and the destruction of chemical materials.

The European Union is gravely concerned about the systematic and repeated use of chlorine as chemical weapons since last year as confirmed in the reports of the OPCW Fact Finding Mission (FFM) set up to establish the facts around these allegations. New similar allegations are continuing to be made. We share the view that the evidence presented by the FFM is substantial. This included reports of the use of helicopters, a capability that only the Syrian regime possesses. We support the Director-General's decision that the FFM continue its work and stress that those individuals responsible for any use of chemicals as weapons including chlorine or any other toxic chemical must be held accountable. In the same vein, we welcome the adoption of UNSC Resolution 2235 establishing an OPCW-UN Joint Investigative Mechanism (JIM) to identify perpetrators responsible for chemical attacks in Syria. The JIM must begin its work as soon as possible.

The risk that non-state actors acquire weapons of mass destruction adds a further critical dimension. The European Union is gravely concerned by the possibility of such actors acquiring radiological and nuclear materials for use in attacks. We call on States to combat effectively this threat for the international community. We are also gravely concerned about reports on the use of chemical weapons by non-state actors in Iraq and Syria.

It is vitally important to enhance international cooperation, both in the framework of the United Nations and amongst all Member States, in order to address these challenges. Since the beginning, we have been a staunch supporter of the robust and effective implementation of the UNSCR 1540 resolution with the objective of strengthening global efforts in this regard. New projects have been adopted with a view to continue promoting the full implementation of the resolution and to provide assistance to third countries in complying with their obligations under UNSCR 1540. We stand ready to assist in the comprehensive review of the implementation of the resolution due to take place next year. The European Union also calls on all States that have not yet done so to ratify the International convention on the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism.

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 through our diplomatic and financial engagement, also bearing in mind the outcome of the ninth Article XIV Conference and the upcoming 20th anniversary of the Treaty's opening for signature in 2016. 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.

The EU has condemned the nuclear tests conducted by the DPRK as well as its threat of another nuclear test in outright violation of its international obligations, in particular under relevant UN Security Council Resolutions 1695, 1718, 1874, 2087 and 2094 that urge the DPRK to abandon its nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles programmes and return to compliance with the NPT and IAEA Safeguards at an early date. The EU continues to attach
the highest importance to the IAEA maintaining the preparedness to conduct monitoring and verification in the DPRK.

The meeting convened at the United Nations Headquarters in New York on 27-31 July 2015 at the initiative of the European Union with the assistance of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs entitled “Multilateral Negotiations on an International Code of Conduct for Outer Space Activities” was very well-attended, with delegations from 109 States and 8 inter- and non-governmental organizations. We regret that negotiations could not commence after so many years of consultations, but we are confident that the rich and substantial discussions in New York both on the substance and on the process will help the international community to move forward.

The European Union continues to believe that responsible space-faring nations as well as those who aspire to become space-faring nations should endeavour to agree on key principles in order to preserve outer space as a global common good. We hope that all nations would render their support to such a step, with the shared sense of urgency and responsibility for preserving outer space for the peaceful use by all humankind. We also hope that such an announcement could be part of wider efforts to facilitate future negotiations on an international code of conduct for outer space activities.

Promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women is an important priority for the European Union. We believe that the active participation and leadership of women in peace and security decision making and action is crucial in achieving peace, security and sustainable development. The role of women in these areas, including disarmament and non-proliferation should be enhanced by promoting gender consciousness and by the equal participation of women and men.

The European Union is committed to the full implementation of resolution 1325 and all other relevant resolutions of the UN Security Council aimed at advancing the women, peace and security agenda. This year marks the 15th anniversary of UNSCR 1325 which provides an additional opportunity to make our commitments on women, peace and security a reality.