EU General Statement

before the vote on Cluster 1 (Nuclear Weapons) concerning the Middle East

Ms. Anne Kemppainen
Minister Counsellor
Head of Political Section for Non-proliferation and Disarmament
Delegation of the European Union in Geneva

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Mr. Chairman,

I am speaking on behalf of the European Union.

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

With regard to the Middle East in the nuclear cluster, I would like to make the following observations.

The European Union reaffirms its strong commitment to the establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems in the Middle East.

We reiterate our support for the Resolution on the Middle East adopted by the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the goals and objectives adopted by the 2000 and the 2010 Review Conferences.

We consider the 1995 Resolution valid until its goals and objectives are achieved. We deeply regret 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

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

The European Union has continuously expressed its readiness to assist in the process leading to the establishment of a zone in the Middle East free of weapons of mass destruction. In order to help to produce a conducive atmosphere and move the process forward, the European Union organized a seminar in 2011 and in 2012 as well as a capacity-building workshop in 2014 for Middle Eastern diplomats in support of a Helsinki conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems.

We continue to call on all States in the region, which have not yet done so, to accede to the NPT, the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention, to sign and ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, and to conclude a Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement, the Additional Protocol and, as applicable, a modified Small Quantities Protocol with the IAEA.

The EU condemns in the strongest terms the confirmed use of chemical weapons by the Syrian Armed Forces and Da'esh. The findings of the JIM reports require strong action by the OPCW and UN Security Council. All those responsible must be held accountable.

Mr. Chairman,

The EU facilitated the diplomatic efforts of the E3/EU+3 countries and Iran to find a negotiated solution to the Iranian nuclear issue. These efforts culminated last year in the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action which was concluded in full conformity with the principles of the NPT. The High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy will continue to play a key role in coordinating the work of the Joint Commission which is tasked with overseeing the implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. In this context, it is important that Iran implements the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, fully cooperates with the IAEA and ratifies the Additional Protocol to its Safeguards Agreement. These are essential prerequisites for the IAEA to be able to provide the international community with the necessary assurances aiming at ensuring the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme. The full and sustained implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, and of UN Security Council Resolution 2231, which endorses it, should contribute positively to regional and international peace and security.

It has been more than five years since the IAEA Board of Governors reported Syria’s non-compliance with its Safeguards Agreement to the UN Security Council and the General Assembly. We deeply regret that Syria still has to remedy its non-compliance. The EU calls on Syria to fully cooperate with the IAEA to resolve all outstanding issues and to swiftly conclude, bring into force and implement in full the Additional Protocol.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.