

**UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL  
OPEN DEBATE**

**ON**

**THE NON-PROLIFERATION OF  
WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION**

**STATEMENT BY**

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TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

**22 APRIL 2004**

*Please check against delivery*

Mr President,

1 Allow me to join my other colleagues in thanking you for organising this public meeting on the Non-proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction, which provides non-Security Council members the opportunity to share our views on this very important issue.

Mr President,

2 Post-9/11, it is not possible to realistically discuss the threat of WMD proliferation without reference to terrorism. The global threat of WMD proliferation, and the nexus between WMD proliferation and terrorism, is of real and grave concern. There is ample evidence and a growing consensus among terrorism experts that it is possible, if not highly probable, that the more sophisticated terrorist movements, such as Al-Qaeda, will employ WMD - biological, chemical, radiological, or nuclear - against their enemies. It is no longer a question of whether, but when, this will be attempted.

3 The nexus between WMD proliferation and terrorism is of particular concern to a small, densely populated country like Singapore. Last year, SARS gave several countries a small foretaste of what a biological or chemical attack might be like. The threat is real. A WMD terrorist attack on a small state can mean the physical end of the country. International terrorist networks are deeply embedded in Southeast Asia. It will take many years to root them out. Until they are rooted out, we will be at risk.

4 In June 2003, authorities in Thailand intercepted a man trying to sell radioactive materials that could have been used to make "dirty bombs". The 70 pounds of cesium-137, reportedly smuggled out of Russia, were seized by Thai police after an intelligence tip off. The timely sharing of intelligence to find and intercept such dangerous materials, and stopping it from falling into the wrong hands, is a positive development. The bad news is that it confirms terrorists' intent on the use of WMD and related weapons.

Mr President,

5 Singapore is serious about preventing WMD proliferation. We continue to do what we can in global counter-proliferation and counter-terrorism efforts. Nationally, we have tightened up our export control regime. In January 2003, the Strategic Goods (Control) Act, which is aimed at countering the illicit shipment of strategic goods, weapons of mass destruction and related materials through our ports, came into effect. We made an early decision to participate in the Container Security Initiative, which intensifies the screening of containers. Last year, we intercepted several shipments of items that could have been used in the manufacture of chemical weapons or missiles. We will ensure that all Singapore port facilities and Singapore-flagged ships comply with the requirements of the IMO International Ship and Port Facility Security Code by 1 July 2004.

Mr President,

6 No country can deal with terrorism, let alone WMD terrorism, on its own. We need to act quickly to close the gap in current national, regional and international regimes, which today deal primarily with states, and face up to the new challenges posed by non-state actors.

7 Singapore understands many of the concerns expressed by some of the other delegations here today. For example, they question whether the Security Council can assume the role of treaty making or legislating rules for Member States. We agree that a multilateral treaty regime would be ideal. But multilateral negotiations could take years. Time is not on our side. Urgent action is needed. We therefore support the draft resolution. We agree that some of the details such as the follow-up mechanisms and the reporting mechanisms need to be ironed out. The draft resolution is only a first step. But we need to take this first step and tighten the current non-proliferation regime. The longer we take to act, the more time the terrorists have to plot against us.

8 We therefore welcome the initiative by the Security Council to further enhance, through this resolution, the regime against the proliferation of WMD. We believe that it will help make the world a safer place. We urge all countries to support it.

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