



EU Statement

By

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UN General Assembly 71st Session
First Committee Thematic Discussion on Other Weapons of Mass Destruction

United Nations
New York
17 October 2016

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1. I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

2. The Candidate Countries 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 country Iceland, member of the European Economic Area, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia, align themselves with this statement.

Mr. Chairman,

3. The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and their means of delivery remains a growing threat to international peace and security. The European Union is gravely concerned about the risk of state or non-state actors acquiring such weapons or material, which has already become a dark reality in Syria and also in Iraq.

4. The international community cannot remain silent when challenged by the use of chemical weapons. While we welcome the complete destruction of the chemical weapons declared by the Syrian Arab Republic, we find the gaps and discrepancies in its declaration unacceptable and the continued use of chemical weapons in the country deeply shocking and disturbing. We reiterate that the use of chemical weapons by anyone anytime, anywhere and under any circumstances is clearly contrary to international law and must be wholly condemned. In this vein, we fully support the work of the Declaration Assessment Team (DAT) and the Fact Finding Mission (FFM) of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and the Joint Investigative Mechanism (JIM). The third report of the JIM identifies the responsibility of the Syrian Government in at least two cases of chlorine attack incidents and Da'esh in another attack incident involving sulfur mustard gas. This warrants appropriate action as decided by UN Security Council Resolution 2118. There can be no impunity and those responsible for any use of chemical weapons must be held accountable.

5. Earlier this year, the risk that terrorists could acquire some of the remaining Libyan chemicals warranted a swift international action. We commend the OPCW for planning the safe removal and destruction of the chemicals to which several EU Member States contributed. The EU and its Member States confirm their readiness to support the implementation of the destruction plan.

6. The recent events have reminded us of the importance of universal adherence to relevant Treaties and conventions, in particular in the Middle East. The European Union continues to support the objective of creating in the Middle East a zone free of nuclear weapons, all other weapons of mass destruction, and their means of delivery. We 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 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 NPT Review Conference.

7. We once again call upon all States not yet Party to ratify or accede to the Chemical Weapons Convention without delay, thus contributing to the goal of a world free of chemical

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

weapons. The European Union continues to support activities in all areas of the Convention, including national implementation, assistance and protection, international cooperation and in particular the African Programme. The implementation of all articles of the Convention also constitutes a tangible contribution to the effort to prevent and respond to acts of terrorism and by non-state actors in the field of chemical security.

8. The European Union attaches high priority to the strengthening of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC). We are strongly committed to a successful outcome of the Eight Review Conference and provide substantial contribution to this end. In preparation of the Review Conference, a series of EU-sponsored regional workshops for Eastern Europe, Asia, Africa and Latin America were organised with the aim to increase understanding of the key issues and challenges and build consensus on the reinforcement of the Convention. We are working to ensure that the States Parties address the following priorities: building and sustaining confidence in compliance, supporting national implementation, supporting the UN Secretary General's Mechanism for investigation of alleged use of biological and chemical weapons and agents, and promoting universality among the 21 States not yet party to the Convention. We call on all States not yet party to join the BTWC without delay.

Mr. Chairman,

9. UN Security Council Resolution 1540 remains a central pillar of the international non-proliferation architecture. The European Union warmly welcomes the UNSCR 1540 comprehensive review in 2016. We expect this ongoing review process to reaffirm the centrality, importance and authority of the Resolution. As a result of the comprehensive review, the EU and its Member States favour a strong restatement of the UN Security Council's support for Resolution 1540, including through a further Security Council Resolution. The European Union is at present favourably considering the adoption of a new Council Decision in support of UNSCR 1540 implementation and universality. We are confident that new projects under this scheme can be implemented from early 2017 onwards, taking into account the outcome of the comprehensive review.

10. The proliferation of ballistic missiles and the continuation of missile tests outside all existing transparency and pre-notification schemes and in violation of relevant UN Security Council resolutions is a matter of grave concern. The European Union once again urges the DPRK to immediately halt all its launches using ballistic missile technology and to fully comply with all its international obligations. We underscore the importance of UN Security Council Resolution 2231 which calls upon Iran not to undertake any activity related to ballistic missiles designed to be capable of delivering nuclear weapons, including launches using such ballistic missile technology. The attempts of the Syrian government to acquire and use ballistic missiles only add to the suffering of the Syrian people and further undermine efforts to establish peace and security in the region.

11. The European Union strongly supports the Hague Code of Conduct (HCoC) to which all EU Member States have subscribed. We call on all States in particular those with significant activities in the area of ballistic missiles and space launch vehicles to adhere to the Code. The EU will further promote its universalisation and, where possible and appropriate, a closer relationship between the Code and the UN system. We are also in favour of examining further multilateral steps to prevent the threat of missile proliferation and to promote disarmament efforts in the missile field.

12. Export controls are very important tools to prevent the proliferation of chemical and biological weapons as well as the proliferation of missile technology. In this regard, the Australia Group and the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) continue to play a key role. All EU countries are following the EU Control List to implement the commitments under the multilateral export control regimes. We therefore promote actively the full membership of all 28 EU Member States in the international export control regimes as this would reinforce the efficiency of export controls and contribute to the strengthening of the regimes.

Mr. Chairman,

13. It is vitally important that we strengthen national capabilities and enhance international cooperation to address these threats. The European Union will support countries to prevent, detect and fight against chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear risks. Progress has been made to establish CBRN Centres of Excellence in eight regions of the world. The aim of this EU initiative is to reinforce the institutional capacity of 56 partner countries and strengthen their overall security architecture.

14. The EU also supports other international mechanisms designed to prevent the proliferation of WMDs, such as the Global Partnership against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction. The EU Centres of Excellence continue to contribute within the Global Partnership. EU Member States play an active role also in several other fora, such as the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism and the Global Health Security Agenda.

Thank you, Mr Chairman.