

**UK Statement
to the 2008 Non-Proliferation Treaty Preparatory Committee**

**Regional Issues, including with respect to the Middle East and the implementation of the
1995 Middle East Resolution**

by
**Ms Fiona Paterson
Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Kingdom,
Geneva, 6 May 2008**

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Mr Chairman

The United Kingdom fully supports the statement made by the delegation of the Republic of Slovenia on behalf of the European Union. I would now like to add a few national comments to what has been said.

Mr Chairman

Regional issues in respect of the NPT fall into at least two categories. There are those areas where non-compliance or apparent non-compliance with the Treaty undermine confidence and pose a threat to regional and broader security. And there are those where countries remain outside the Treaty and the framework which, as I mentioned in my remarks at the start of this meeting, has been one of the mainstays of international peace and security over the past four decades.

In both cases there may be deep-lying tensions and a failure to achieve the regional integration, which has become a feature of our increasingly globalised world. Mitigating these can and should play a decisive role in reducing the perceived need for armaments of all descriptions. But security is not only built on strong defences or the absence of military force. Security is also a function of flourishing trade and investment, of regional co-operation on matters of mutual interest, and on increasing levels of human exchange whether for commercial, cultural, family, sporting or touristic purposes.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea compromised security in the Korean Peninsula and beyond with an attempted nuclear test on 9 October 2006. The United Kingdom condemned the attempted test and supports full and prompt implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1718, which requires the DPRK to abandon all its nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programmes and to fulfill its obligations to the NPT. The United Kingdom also strongly backs the Six-Party Talks process, which aims for the peaceful and verifiable de-nuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula, in accordance with the 19 September 2005 Joint Statement. We believe the successful conclusion of the 6PT offers a foundation for the modernizing and strengthening of DPRK's economy and increasing insertion into both regional and broader international community.

Mr Chairman

The United Kingdom has already made its position clear on the nuclear ambitions of Iran. That is also the position of the international community as manifested in four United Nations Security Council Resolutions, most recently UNSCR 1803 in March. But we also wish to see resolution of the issues raised by Iran's nuclear programme in a way that will allow Iran to have a modern, civil nuclear industry, to develop its economy, to diversify and expand its trade, and to raise living standards. This will promote confidence throughout the region and be a key building-block in the construction of a Middle East zone free from weapons of mass destruction. The United Kingdom therefore once again calls on Iran to study carefully and seriously the proposal that P5+1 agreed and put forward with seriousness and good faith on 2 May.

Mr.Chairman

There remain three countries outside the Non-Proliferation Treaty. In our opening statement, we said that the United Kingdom regards the NPT as one of the key struts underpinning international peace and security and that the Treaty is as relevant now as it was when it was negotiated four decades ago. The United Kingdom is committed to strengthening the NPT. We want to re-invigorate the sense of common endeavour and shared security that is at its heart. Universalisation of the NPT would strengthen both the Treaty and global security. It is in that context that we continue to urge India, Israel and Pakistan to accede to the NPT as non-nuclear weapon States.

It is possible to strengthen the NPT without achieving universalisation. We do not and should not make progress on one dependent on the other. There is a respectable argument that a stronger, more robust NPT would make accession more attractive to the States that remain outside. But equally we should not abandon the vision of a truly global NPT and efforts to bring the so-called D3 towards it as simply too difficult.

The United Kingdom co-sponsored the Middle East Resolution at the 1995 Non-Proliferation Treaty Review and Extension Conference. And we have consistently supported relevant resolutions at First Committee over the intervening years. The United Kingdom wishes to see progress towards a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and a Middle East that is free of all weapons of mass destruction. We note the working paper put forward by Egypt and will give the proposals that it contains the most careful consideration.

On Friday representatives of the Quartet met in London to discuss the situation in the Middle East. The United Kingdom strongly endorses the Quartet's support for the on-going Israeli-Palestinian negotiations and the goal of an agreement to establish a Palestinian State by the end of this year. We note in particular the call to the international community to remain constructively engaged in support of the negotiations and the emphasis upon achieving visible progress on the ground to build confidence and create an atmosphere that is supportive of the negotiations. A just, durable and comprehensive peace settlement in the Middle East is a hugely desirable goal in its own right. It would bring incalculable benefits to the people of the region and far beyond. The United Kingdom will do all it can to support and promote the Annapolis process.

Mr Chairman

A Middle East peace settlement, together with closure of the Iranian nuclear dossier, would also be an enormous step towards fulfilling the mandate of the 1995 Middle East Resolution.

Achieving those goals will require great energy, determination and goodwill. But that should not be an excuse for inactivity in striving for progress on the Middle East Resolution. It is not for the United Kingdom or other outside parties to dictate. To be successful the process must be inclusive and the countries of the region must have a sense of ownership. But the United Kingdom does wish to see dialogue and to see that dialogue prosper. Our experience in Northern Ireland shows that progress can be made in parallel on a political settlement and on practical confidence-building measures to replace tension and mistrust with predictability and an increasingly positive dynamic. They are mutually reinforcing. The United Kingdom looks forward to participating in the conference on this issue at London University's School of Oriental and African Studies next month and strongly supports the conference being organized by the European Union and IIS. We believe there is genuine merit and value in regularizing and mainstreaming constructive dialogue and in the exchange of ideas.