

Mr. Secretary-General,

The United Nations has an important role to play in the debate on disarmament. Europe wishes to play a full-fledged role in that discussion. That is why I wanted to draw your attention to the proposals that the European Union has presented this year at the United Nations.

On September 23, I told the United Nations General Assembly that Europe wants to work for peace. This is true with respect to the fight against terrorism, the fight against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems, and crisis management.

It is also true with respect to disarmament, and notably nuclear disarmament. It is particularly relevant to Europe, two of whose members have nuclear weapons. Europe has already done much for disarmament. Keenly aware of the fact that its own security benefits from the pursuit of global disarmament efforts, Europe is prepared to do more. Our ambition extends to every aspect of disarmament, for we are convinced of the need to strive for general disarmament. In this area as in others, Europe wants to act in accordance with a comprehensive political and strategic vision.

The Non-proliferation Treaty Review Conference in 2010 represents a landmark date for the international non-proliferation regime. We must seize this opportunity to move toward a safer world, one in which it is possible to meet all the objectives enshrined in the NPT, whether they be non-proliferation, disarmament, or access to nuclear energy for peaceful uses. As for disarmament, Europe wished to propose a clear direction as of this year by presenting the United Nations General Assembly with concrete and realistic disarmament initiatives:

- the universal ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty and the completion of its verification regime, and the dismantling as soon as possible of all nuclear testing facilities in a manner that is transparent and open to the international community ;
- the opening without delay and without preconditions of negotiations for a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons, and the introduction of an immediate moratorium on the production of such material;
- the establishment of transparency and confidence-building measures by the nuclear powers;
- further progress in the current discussions between the United States and Russia on the development of a legally-binding post-START arrangement, and an overall reduction in the global stockpile of nuclear weapons in accordance with Article VI of the NPT, in particular by the States which possess the largest arsenals;
- the inclusion of tactical nuclear weapons, by those States which have them, in their general arms control and disarmament processes, with a view to their reduction and elimination;
- the start of consultations on a treaty banning short and intermediate-range ground-to-ground missiles;
- the adherence to and implementation by all of the Hague Code of Conduct;
- mobilisation in all other areas of disarmament.

Mr. Ban Ki-moon
Secretary-General of the United Nations

Moving forward on the path of disarmament implies that the will to progress is shared unanimously. Non-proliferation, disarmament and arms control, like confidence, transparency and reciprocity, are key elements of collective security.

I hope that the international community will join the European Union in supporting and carrying out this plan of action; it is an ambitious program that is truly capable of achieving concrete progress on the path of disarmament.

Europe is counting on your support. I hope you will convey to the international community, particularly within the United Nations, this initiative in support of a safer world.

Please accept, Mr. Secretary-General, the expression of my highest regards.

Nicolas Sarkozy