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Explanation of Vote on Iran and UNSC Resolution 1737

Ambassador Alejandro Wolff, U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations

Remarks to the Security Council

New York City

December 23, 2006

Mr. President,

Iran's pursuit of a nuclear weapons capability constitutes a grave threat and demands a clear statement from the Security Council. Today, we are placing Iran in the small category of states under Security Council sanctions, and sending Iran an unambiguous message that there are serious repercussions to its continued disregard of its obligations and defiance of this important body.

Nearly four months ago, the Council sent an unequivocal message to Iran: take the steps required by the IAEA Board of Governors, including fully verifiable and sustained suspension of all enrichment-related and reprocessing activities, research, and development. This step was taken to convince Iran to relent from its confrontational course, consider the offer of a negotiated solution by the U.S., France, U.K., Germany, Russia and China on June 1, 2006, and avoid further Security Council action. Regrettably, Iran continues to defy the international community by its continued enrichment activities, its refusal to comply with its obligations under Security Council resolution 1696, and the requests of the IAEA.

This Chapter VII resolution requires Iran to suspend all enrichment-related and reprocessing activities, including research and development, and to stop work on all heavy water related projects, including construction of a heavy water research reactor. This suspension is subject to IAEA verification; a report from the IAEA Director General on the status of this suspension is due to the Council within sixty days. Iran is also required to provide the IAEA the access it needs to verify suspension and resolve outstanding issues. Finally, the IAEA calls on Iran to ratify the Additional Protocol.

In order to persuade Iran to take these steps, the resolution imposes sanctions on elements of the Iranian regime involved in dangerous proliferation activities. It decides that Member States shall not engage in trade with Iran in three key nuclear areas: enrichment, reprocessing, and heavy water projects, and it prohibits Member States from engaging in

any trade with Iran that could contribute to its development of a nuclear weapon delivery system. Similarly, the resolution prohibits Iran from exporting a range of proliferation sensitive technologies or related equipment.

This resolution prohibits any technical or financial assistance related to the transfer or use of the prohibited items to other countries. It requires States to freeze the assets of identified individuals and entities involved in Iran's proliferation sensitive nuclear activities or the development of nuclear weapon delivery systems, and calls on States not to allow international travel by these individuals. The IAEA is also required to stop providing technical cooperation for such activities.

The United States expects that Iran, and all other UN Member States, will immediately act, under their Charter obligations, to implement the requirements of this resolution.

This is the second UN Security Council resolution under Chapter VII on Iran in response to its efforts to obtain a nuclear weapons capability, reflecting the gravity of this situation and the determination of the Council. We hope this resolution will convince Iran that the best way to ensure its security and end its international isolation is to abandon the pursuit of nuclear weapons and take the steps needed to restore international confidence.

In this resolution the Council has clearly affirmed its intention to review Iran's actions based on the IAEA report and to adopt further measures if Iran has not complied fully with its obligations.

We look forward to Iran's full, unconditional, and immediate compliance with this resolution. Iran's cooperation would pave the way for a negotiated solution. We hope that the Iranian leadership comes to understand that the pursuit of a nuclear weapons capability makes it less, not more, secure.

In conclusion this resolution provides an important basis for action. It compels all UN Member States to take all measures necessary to deny Iran equipment, technology, technical assistance, and financial assistance that would contribute to Iran's enrichment, reprocessing, heavy water, or nuclear weapon delivery programs. It is clear on this and not open to interpretation. We will insist on absolute adherence to its requirements, but adoption of this resolution is only a first step. In the coming weeks we will work with the Sanctions Committee to ensure this resolution is as effective as possible. We will also take steps under U.S. law to ensure that we have put in place appropriate measures against individuals and entities involved in the Iranian nuclear and missile programs. We call on every other country to urgently follow suit. Finally, if necessary, we will not hesitate to return to this body for further action if Iran fails to take steps to comply.

Thank you, Mr. President, and Members of the Security Council, for your efforts in helping secure this resolution.

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