



Explanation of Vote on the Nonproliferation Resolution

Ambassador James B. Cunningham, Deputy U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations

U.S. Mission to the United Nations
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[Explanation of Vote by Ambassador James B. Cunningham, Deputy U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations, on the Nonproliferation Resolution, in the Security Council, April 28, 2004]

Thank you, Mr. President.

In his [address](#) to the General Assembly last September, President Bush said that because proliferators would use any route or channel open to them, we need the broadest possible cooperation to stop them. He asked the Security Council to help by adopting a resolution to counter this growing threat. The President called for a resolution that achieved three primary goals: to criminalize the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, to ensure that all countries have strong export controls and to secure sensitive materials within each country's borders. The United States is pleased that the important resolution we adopted today fulfills these key goals and that we have adopted it unanimously, with all that implies.

In this resolution the Council is responding appropriately to what all agree is a clear and present threat to global peace and security: the proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and their means of delivery, especially to non-state actors, including terrorists. Because this threat, and the actions we are taking today, concerns the entire UN Membership, the United States and the cosponsors have made major efforts to consult, listen, and take into account the many views expressed. We share a common goal – to implement the resolution.

Implementation will require States to undertake a variety of steps, both legal and technical, to meet the requirements of the resolution in a manner that best suits their legal systems and procedures. The language in the resolution calls for "effective and appropriate measures" to be taken to meet the requirements set out by the Council; each member state will need to review its laws and to determine what laws or regulations will be necessary to meet the resolution's requirements. Member states are also required to strengthen controls in order to prevent the proliferation of nuclear, chemical, or biological weapons and their means of delivery. Member states are also asked, through this resolution, to submit a first report assessing their implementation of this resolution within six months to the committee established by the resolution.

The United States recognizes, and the resolution clearly states, that some countries may lack the resources to enact and enforce the laws and regulations called for. As the President told the General Assembly last September, we stand ready, as do others as well, to assist countries, as appropriate, that require technical assistance and we encourage others that are able to do so to provide assistance as well.

The resolution clearly states that it will not alter or amend the existing non-proliferation-treaty regimes. The steps to be taken by states under the resolution do not take the place of the commitments that they have made in connection with non-proliferation-treaty regimes.

The Security Council today is responding unanimously to a threat to international peace and security – the uncontrolled spread of nuclear, chemical, biological weapons, their means of delivery, and related materials, by non-state actors, including terrorists, seeking to exploit weak export control laws and security measures in a variety of countries. We believe it is essential that all states maintain adequate controls over their nuclear material, equipment and expertise, not just states party to a specific treaty or supplier regime.

In that regard, as called for in the resolution, we urge all countries to work bilaterally, regionally and internationally to take cooperative action to stop, impede, intercept and otherwise prevent the illicit trafficking in these weapons, related materials and their means of delivery. We are pleased that the resolution addresses the importance of such cooperative action. We believe the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI), [announced](#) by President Bush in Krakow, Poland on May 31, 2003, almost one year ago, is a valuable initiative in this regard. We are pleased that so many states are working with us to interdict shipments of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons, their means of delivery, and related materials. No one nation can meet this challenge alone. We hope that all states will join us in the PSI and other cooperative efforts consistent with national and international legal authorities to stop the flow of these deadly weapons and materials. Halting such traffic is in the interest of all of us.

The United States appreciates the broad cooperation of all members of the Security Council and the wider membership in improving this resolution and addressing this threat to international peace and security. The international community now has a solid basis for moving ahead – working together to deal with this important security issue.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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