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Explanation of Vote by
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Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom

**ADOPTION OF UN SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION ON
NON-PROLIFERATION/ IRAN**

3 March 2008

Check Against Delivery

Mr. President,

I would like to begin by reading the text of a statement which has been agreed by the Foreign Ministers of China, France, Germany, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States of America, with the support of the High Representative of the European Union.

The statement reads as follows:

“Today the UN Security Council adopted resolution 1803, reflecting the international community’s ongoing serious concerns about the proliferation risks of the Iranian nuclear programme. This is the third time that the UN Security Council has sent a strong message of international resolve to Iran by adopting a sanctions resolution under Article 41 of Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations on Iran’s nuclear programme. We deplore Iran’s continued failure to comply with its UN Security Council and IAEA Board requirements, in particular by expanding its enrichment-related activities. We note the progress made in implementing the IAEA-Iran Work Plan and the IAEA’s serious concerns about the “alleged studies,” which are critical to an assessment of a possible military dimension to Iran’s nuclear programme. We call upon Iran to heed the requirements of UN Security Council and the IAEA, including the suspension of its enrichment-related and reprocessing activities.

“We remain committed to an early negotiated solution to the Iranian nuclear issue and reaffirm our commitment to a dual-track approach. We reconfirm the proposals we presented to Iran in June 2006 and are prepared to further develop them. Our proposals will offer substantial opportunities for political, security and economic benefits to Iran and to the region. We urge Iran to take this opportunity to engage with us all and to find a negotiated way forward. We reiterate our recognition of Iran’s right to develop, research, production, and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes in conformity with its NPT obligations. We reconfirm that once the confidence of the international community in the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran’s nuclear programme is restored it will be treated in the same manner as that of any Non-Nuclear Weapon State party to the NPT. We remain ready to negotiate future arrangements, modalities and timing in this respect once the conditions for negotiations have been established.

“This will require further diplomatic efforts and innovative approaches. To that end we have asked Dr. Javier Solana, the European Union’s High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy, to meet with Dr. Saeed Jalili, Secretary of Iran’s Supreme National Security Council, and to address the interests and concerns of both sides in a manner which can gradually create the conditions for the opening of negotiations.”

That concludes the statement on behalf of the six Foreign Ministers.

Mr President,

I should like now to make some remarks in my national capacity.

The British Government welcomes the very broad support for this Security Council Resolution. Its adoption sends a clear message to the Government and people of Iran. It underlines yet again that the international community is profoundly concerned that Iran might be intending to use its nuclear programme for military purposes. The United Kingdom does not have confidence that Iran's programme is for exclusively peaceful purposes. On the contrary, to us their nuclear programme only makes sense as part of plan to develop, at the least, a nuclear weapons capability.

This Resolution is a necessary response to Iran's continued failure to comply with the requirement of the IAEA Board and the Security Council that, while we try to build confidence in Iran's nuclear intentions, Iran has to suspend all enrichment-related and reprocessing activity and work on all heavy water related projects; has to resolve all outstanding questions; and has to implement and ratify the Additional Protocol. The progress Iran has made with the IAEA addresses only one of those issues, and then only partially: Iran has refused to answer the most difficult questions about its past programmes. And as the IAEA report, far from suspending their enrichment activities, Iran has intensified its efforts, including by trying to develop a new generation of centrifuges. Overall, Iran has clearly failed to abide by its legal obligations under successive Security Council resolutions.

The political statement agreed by the Foreign Ministers of the E3 plus 3, with the support of the EU High Representative, makes clear that we remain committed to a negotiated solution on the basis of the far reaching proposals that the six countries agreed in Vienna in June 2006 and which, since that time, we have consistently urged Iran to accept. Our offer would give Iran everything it needs to develop a modern civil nuclear power programme, including legally guaranteed supplies of nuclear fuel. The offer provides Iran with a basis for a transformed relationship with all members of the international community, including with the United States. It is a matter of great regret that for the past 20 months, Iran has ignored our offer.

Mr President, Iran's leaders should listen to what the international community is saying rather than misleading their people by misrepresenting our actions and the IAEA's reports on their nuclear programme. I commend the efforts of the Director General and the officials of the IAEA, but Iran's failure to do what is required of them, as clearly stated by the IAEA, left us no option but to seek further measures in the Security Council.

Those further measures adopted today strengthen the restrictions on individuals and entities closely associated with Iran's proliferation sensitive nuclear activities and with its ballistic missile programme: they increase vigilance over the activities of Iranian banks, particularly Banks Melli and Saderat which we believe are engaged in proliferation sensitive activities; they introduce a provision for careful scrutiny of new commitments for export credits to Iran; and encourage Member States to inspect cargo to and from Iran where there are grounds to believe prohibited items are being transported.

By adopting this resolution, the Security Council has continued its incremental and proportionate approach, gradually increasing the pressure on Iran to address the widely shared concerns about its nuclear programme. Despite Iran's refusal to engage thus far, the British Government urges Iran's leaders to take the opportunity to suspend its enrichment related and reprocessing activities and to co-operate fully with the IAEA, paving the way for the suspension of sanctions and for the start of negotiations which would bring far reaching benefits to the Iranian people and greater stability to the Middle East. If Iran does not take this opportunity, then, as the Resolution makes clear, the Security Council is committed to implementing further additional measures.

With this new resolution, the Security Council is reaffirming the clear choice confronting Iran's leaders: to cooperate with the international community and enjoy the benefits of normal relations with the rest of the World, or to pursue their nuclear programme in disregard of international concerns and worsen still further their international isolation. The choice is for Iran's leaders to make. The British Government hopes they take the positive path; the Iranian people deserve no less.

Thank you, Mr President.