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Statement by Ambassador Alejandro Wolff, Acting U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations, on the adoption of Security Council Resolution 1747 on Iran, March 24, 2007.

Mr. President,

The United States is pleased that the Security Council has once again unanimously taken action against what is clearly a grave threat to international peace and security. The Iranian leadership's continued defiance of this Council in failing to comply with Security Council Resolutions 1696 and 1737 requires that we uphold our responsibilities defined in the Charter of this esteemed body and take necessary action. And while we hope Iran responds to this resolution by complying with its international legal obligations, the United States is fully prepared to support additional measures in 60 days should Iran choose another course.

We are here today because of the decisions of Iran's leadership. Their actions include more than 20 years of deception of the IAEA; a nuclear program hidden from the international community, in violation of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT); a program that is emerging from the shadows slowly, and incompletely, only due to the efforts of international inspectors and outside groups.

Let me quote from the IAEA Director General's latest report summing up the basic problem:

"given the existence in Iran of activities undeclared to the Agency for 20 years, it is necessary for Iran to enable the Agency, through maximum cooperation and transparency, to fully reconstruct the history of Iran's nuclear program. Without such cooperation and transparency, the Agency will not be able to provide assurances about the absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities in Iran or about the exclusively peaceful nature of that program."

The unanimous passage of Resolution 1747 sends a clear and unambiguous message to Iran: the regime's continued pursuit of a nuclear weapons capability, in violation of its treaty obligations as well as its obligations as a Member State of the United Nations, will only further isolate Iran and make it less, not more secure.

In light of this history, it is not only appropriate, but the responsibility of the Security Council to act. And we have done so in a careful and deliberate manner. In July of last year, we adopted Resolution 1696, which demanded that Iran verifiably suspend all of its uranium enrichment-related and reprocessing activities and cooperate fully with the steps required by International Atomic Energy Agency. That resolution was ignored by Iran. Resolution 1737, adopted unanimously last December, took appropriate action against the regime in

light of the failure by Iran's leadership to comply with the decisions of this Council. It, too, was ignored by Iran. Instead, Iran has expanded its enrichment activities and continued construction of the heavy water research reactor at Arak, while scaling back even further its cooperation with the IAEA. Iran called the Council's decisions "invalid" and "an extralegal act" and vowed that the "new resolution won't be an obstacle in the way of Iran's nuclear progress."

Sadly, Iran continues to defy the will of the international community, the decisions of this Council, and its obligations under international law. For this reason it is entirely appropriate and necessary that we have adopted stronger measures to persuade the regime to make its country more secure by abandoning its pursuit of nuclear weapons. Should Iran choose a different path, this resolution makes clear that we are prepared and willing to adopt additional measures. Indeed, in the face of Iran's continued defiance, the United States expects that the Council will continue to incrementally increase pressure on the Iranian regime.

Let me be clear, though, to the Iranian people: these measures we are adopting today are in no way meant to punish the civilian population of Iran. Resolution 1747 is properly tailored to target Iranian institutions and officials that support Iran's nuclear and missile programs. It forbids Iran from providing any arms to anyone, anywhere and calls on all nations not to export to Iran any major arms. The world has benefited greatly from the rich, vibrant culture that the people of Iran have to offer. My own country is proud to be the home to hundreds of thousands citizens and residents of Iranian origin – and we are fortunate to benefit from their many contributions to our society. We hope for a different dynamic with Iran. As President Bush has stated,

"Iran now has an opportunity to make its choice. I would hope they would make the choice that most of the free world wants them to make, which is there is no need to have a weapons program; there is no need to isolate your people...it's not in your interest to do so. And should they agree to verifiably suspend their enrichment, the United States will be at the table with our partners."

The decisions of the Iranian leadership, however, required the Council to act. It is our solemn responsibility to take measures which will not only halt the development of Iran's nuclear weapons programs, but to encourage the leadership of Iran to choose a different path, which will benefit the entire Iranian nation – including its government-professed aspiration for nuclear energy.

With respect to the measures adopted today, we would also like to note our understanding that the new resolution does not introduce any changes to the provisions in paragraph 15 of Resolution 1737. The asset freeze, therefore, does not prevent a person or entity designated in the annexes to UN Security Council Resolution 1737 and to this resolution from making payments due under a contract entered into force before that person or entity was listed in cases covered by paragraph 15.

The Iranian leadership has claimed that this Council seeks to deprive Iran of its right to peaceful nuclear energy -- and we may hear this again today. This is simply not true. The six governments, including my own, that have been trying in vain to get to negotiations with the Iranians over the past year recognize Iran's right to peaceful, civil nuclear energy in conformity with all articles and obligations of the NPT. In fact, the generous proposal put on the table by the six parties last June – an offer that remains on the table today – includes assistance in the construction of civilian light water nuclear power plants. These plants would generate electricity for the people of Iran, but be of no use to Iran's nuclear weapons program. Many other governments around the world, including some represented on this Council, enjoy national civilian nuclear energy programs without any difficulties, demonstrating that there is no incompatibility between a country's right to a peaceful nuclear energy program and its non-proliferation obligations. Iran's rejection of this offer sends a deeply troubling signal to the entire international community. Nonetheless, my government associates itself with the statement read by the United Kingdom reaffirming our offer and willingness to resolve this issue through negotiations.

Mr. President, the current path chosen by Iran's leadership poses a direct challenge to the very principles on which the United Nations was founded. Iran's leadership openly proclaims that this Council is "illegal" and its resolutions are "torn pieces of paper." And Iran's Supreme Leader has pledged that Iran will undertake "illegal acts" if the Council proceeded with adoption of this resolution. Article 2 of the Charter makes clear that all Members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state. Calls by Iran's leaders to have Israel, a Member State of the United Nations, "wiped off the map" stand in stark contrast to everything for which this body

stands. This contrast is amplified by Iran's continued well-known role as one of the world's leading state-sponsors of terrorism.

The United Nations was born from the ashes and horrific events of World War II and the Holocaust. Sadly, we have seen attempts by Iran's President to question the undeniable tragedies that unfolded during that period. This is why it was so significant that the General Assembly established a formal day of Remembrance of the Holocaust, in addition to its adoption by consensus a Resolution rejecting denials of the Holocaust. To forget the past, or even worse, attempt to rewrite it is to invite it to be repeated. We cannot allow that to happen.

In a few moments, we will hear from Iranian Foreign Minister Mottaki. In the past, we have heard Iranian representatives profess Iran's peaceful intentions, claim incorrectly violations of Iran's rights, argue about so-called double standards, and raise other false claims designed to distract the international community and world opinion from the issue at hand – Iran's non-compliance with its obligations. We hope that the Foreign Minister's presence here reflects his government's understanding of the weight that should be attached to the decisions of this Council, and the binding obligations that Iran has as a member of this Organization under Article 25 of the Charter to accept and carry out the decisions of the Security Council. We look forward to his response and hope that his message is one that this Council, and the entire international community can embrace. Anything less would signal continued disregard and disdain for the body to which he asked to speak.

Mr. President, in closing let me reiterate that the United States remains firmly committed to finding a peaceful and diplomatic solution to resolve what we all feel is a grave threat to international peace and security. And, while we regret the need for this resolution, our vote here today shows that the Council can and will act accordingly when countries violate their international obligations.

We look forward to Iran's full compliance with this Resolution, which would signal its willingness to engage in constructive negotiations over the future of its nuclear program. These negotiations, if successfully completed, will have profound and tangible benefits for Iran, and most importantly, for the Iranian people.

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