

Sixty-Ninth UNGA First Committee

Cluster Five: Explanation of Vote Before the Vote

by

Ambassador Robert A. Wood
Alternate Representative
Delegation of the United States of America

on behalf of France, the United Kingdom and the United States

L.43, Agenda Item 96 (e)
“Effects of the use of armaments and ammunitions
containing depleted uranium”

New York, October 31, 2014

Mr. Chairman,

I am speaking on behalf of France, the United Kingdom and the United States to explain our negative vote on draft resolution L.43 “Effects of the use of armaments and ammunitions containing depleted uranium”.

Mr. Chairman, this is not a new issue.

The environmental and long-term health effects of the use of depleted uranium munitions have been thoroughly investigated by the World Health Organization, the United Nations Environmental Program, the International Atomic Energy Agency, NATO, the Centres for Disease Control, the European Commission, and others.

None of these inquiries has documented long-term environmental or health effects attributable to use of these munitions. It is therefore regrettable that the conclusions of these studies are thus ignored, and that the authors are calling for further studies without taking into account the existing research.

It is further regrettable that the sponsors of this resolution have failed to quote the response from 2010 from the United Nations Environment Programme in its entirety and tried a partial quotation to strengthen their alleged claim. This quote reads as follows:

“The main scientific findings were consistent across the three assessments. Measurements taken at the depleted uranium sites showed that, even in areas

with widespread depleted uranium contamination, the overall levels of radioactivity were low and within acceptable standards, with no immediate dangers from either particle based or waterbourne toxicity”.

Given the lack of tangible evidence to the contrary we do not recognize the presupposed potential risk to health and the environment and therefore do not support UN resolutions that presuppose Depleted Uranium is harmful.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.