Following is the text of the G8 Foreign Ministers Meeting Chair's Statement:

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G8 Foreign Ministers met in Washington, D.C., on April 11-12, 2012, to exchange views and coordinate actions on a range of country-specific, regional, and transnational issues that impact global peace and security. They discussed these issues with the recognition that economic forces have been key to transitions in countries over the last year and directly affect foreign policy decision-making. The G8 recognize that economic statecraft, including development policy, along with traditional bilateral and multilateral diplomatic efforts, and an increased role for women in peace and security issues, will be crucial in sustaining greater democracy, promoting economic prosperity, and maintaining international peace, security, and stability in times of change. With this in mind, the Ministers discussed the impact of ongoing political transitions in the Middle East and North Africa, Middle East peace, Iran, the DPRK, Afghanistan, Africa, terrorism, maritime security, and transnational organized crime, among other issues.

Political Transitions in the Middle East and North Africa

The world is witnessing an unprecedented and ongoing wave of popular protest and societal transformation across the Middle East and North Africa. Those protesting, whether in public squares or on social networks, were united by a common demand for rights and dignity, economic opportunity, and democratic reform. This bottom-up movement continues today. The G8 Foreign Ministers reaffirmed their commitment and support for the new democracies born from these movements and other countries engaging in political and economic reforms. These developments enhance the prospects for the emergence of a more inclusive, stable, prosperous, and democratic region while there remain unmet challenges including in the sphere of economy, that need to be overcome. Governments across the region will be judged by their respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms and rule of law. The Ministers noted the role the G8 can play, including working through the Deauville Partnership and the Broader Middle East and North Africa Initiative, to help countries consolidate democratic gains, solidify political reform, and support inclusive economic growth. These efforts should include promoting respect for universal human rights, including the right to practice one's religion or belief; democratic principles and institutions; the rule of law; religious pluralism; engaging with youth; and full political participation for all citizens, including women. In this regard, the G8 underline the critical role of independent civil society organizations.

Role of Women in International Peace and Security

Women can be powerful actors for peace, security, and prosperity. When women participate in peace processes and other formal decision-making processes, they can initiate and inspire more progress on human rights, justice, national reconciliation, and economic revitalization. They can build coalitions across ethnic and sectarian lines and speak up for marginalized and minority groups. Yet women are regularly excluded, whether in peace negotiations or in political transitions. Recognizing that the political transitions in the Middle East and North Africa are unprecedented opportunities to broaden political participation and legitimacy across the region, the Ministers noted that more needs to be done to take advantage of this opportunity. The Ministers have strong concerns that women’s political participation has been reduced in some countries and human rights and fundamental freedoms of women are at the risk of even further regression. They expressed strong concern over the continuing violence against women and girls worldwide, particularly sexual and gender-based violence in conflict and post-conflict situations and the fact that gender discrimination remains enshrined in
many countries' legal systems. In response to these concerns, Ministers noted the important role the G8 can have in advancing the implementation of relevant UN Security Council resolutions on women, peace and security issues, and requested that G8 experts develop options for how the G8 might work together and with others to enhance the role of women in international peace and security.

Syria

The G8 Ministers remain gravely concerned by the appalling loss of life and humanitarian crisis in Syria since their previous meeting. Against that background, the Ministers welcome the report of Joint Special Envoy Kofi Annan that a fragile cessation of violence has taken effect in Syria despite isolated incidents. The Ministers support the steps outlined by the Special Envoy and call for urgent action by the UN Security Council to follow through on those steps, including the immediate approval of an advance observer mission. The Ministers call on the Syrian Government and all parties to comply fully with all aspects of the six-point plan.

Middle East Peace

The Ministers noted the Quartet Principals meeting which was held in Washington on April 11. They expressed support for the broader Quartet's efforts and welcomed the leadership of the Jordanian Government in advancing dialogue between the parties. The Ministers reiterate their support for all elements of the Quartet's September 23, 2011 statement and confirm their commitment to a just, lasting, and comprehensive peace in the Middle East. The Ministers stressed that a long-term solution to this conflict can be achieved only through direct negotiations, on the basis of the September 23, 2011 statement of the Middle East Quartet. Ministers called on parties to refrain from unilateral actions and to create an atmosphere conducive to peace. They strongly reaffirm that unilateral actions by either party cannot prejudge the outcome of negotiations. The Ministers call on the parties to continue dialogue and implement measures that build trust and improve the climate for negotiations. In light of the fundamental changes across the Arab world, Ministers noted the importance for a political settlement that will benefit the Palestinian people and safeguard Israel's security. The Ministers also acknowledged the positive steps taken over the past year by the Palestinian Authority to prepare its institutions for statehood. Noting the March 21st Ad-Hoc Liaison Committee (AHLC) meeting in Brussels, they called on the international community to ensure the contribution of $1.1 billion in assistance to meet the Palestinian Authority’s 2012 recurrent financing requirements. They also called on the Government of Israel to support the Palestinian Authority’s fiscal stability and to facilitate sustainable growth of the Palestinian economy by taking further meaningful steps to improve movement of people and goods, development, and trade and exports in the West Bank and Gaza.

Iraq

The Ministers affirm their commitment to support Iraq in strengthening its democratic processes, developing its economy, and building mutually beneficial diplomatic, economic, and security ties throughout the region. They agreed that the political process in Iraq should move forward through political dialogue and real power-sharing, within the framework of the Constitution. The G8 will seek out opportunities to broaden the scope of their engagement with Iraq across all sectors – diplomatic, security, trade, education, culture, law enforcement, environment, and energy cooperation – and encourage engagement from other nations and international organizations, particularly with regard to reintegrating Iraq into the region and wider international community. In this regard, the Ministers congratulate Iraq for successfully hosting the Arab League Summit at the end of March 2012.

Iran

Iran’s persistent failure to comply with its obligations under UNSC resolutions and to meet the requirements of the IAEA Board of Governors resolutions is a cause of urgent concern. However, noting the prospective resumption of talks between Iran and the E3+3 (China, France, Germany, Russia, the United Kingdom, the United States, and the European Union High Representative), the Ministers emphasized their desire for a peaceful and negotiated resolution to the nuclear issue. They urged Iran to enter into a sustained process of constructive and serious dialogue without precondition on the basis of reciprocity and a step-by-step approach to restore international confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran’s nuclear program consistent with the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) and with full implementation by Iran of UNSC and International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Board of Governors’ resolutions. In that regard, the Ministers expressed the deep concerns of the international community regarding possible military dimensions of Iran’s nuclear program, as described in the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) reports of November 2011 and February 2012.

In addition, noting IAEA Board of Governors’ resolution GOV 2011/69 adopted 18 November 2011, the Ministers stressed that it is essential for Iran and the Agency to intensify their dialogue aiming at the urgent resolution of all outstanding issues, particularly those related to possible military dimensions. They also noted that the IAEA Director General reported in February that no agreement was reached between Iran and the Agency including access to relevant sites in Iran, as requested by the Agency. In that context, the Ministers urge Iran to fulfill its undertaking to grant access to Parchin. The Ministers called on Iran to comply fully with its international obligations, including all relevant resolutions of the United Nations Security Council and the IAEA Board of Governors, and to cooperate substantively with the IAEA, including by granting unrestricted access to all relevant information, documentation, sites, material, and personnel requested by the Agency; to answer the IAEA’s questions and concerns regarding Iran’s nuclear program, including its possible military dimensions; and to implement immediately the Additional Protocol and the Modified Code 3.1. The Ministers expressed
their support for efforts to work toward a comprehensive, negotiated, long-term solution which restores international confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran’s nuclear program, while respecting Iran’s right to the peaceful use of nuclear energy consistent with the NPT.

In light of the human rights situation in Iran, the Ministers called on the Government of Iran to fully observe universally recognized human rights and fundamental freedoms and to abide by its international obligations regarding human rights. They deplored interference with media, arbitrary detentions and arrests, and called on the Iranian authorities to lift restrictions on freedom of movement and communication of Iranian opposition leaders that are contrary to international human rights obligations. They urged Iran to cooperate constructively with all relevant UN human rights mechanisms and to allow a visit by the UN Special Rapporteur for Human Rights in Iran. They further called for Iran to make progress on its Human Rights Council Universal Periodic Review Recommendations. The Ministers condemned the targeting of diplomatic and consular missions and representatives protected under international law, all acts of and support for terrorism, and the assassination of Iranian scientists.

Democratic People’s Republic of Korea

The Ministers voiced renewed concern about the behavior of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) on a wide range of issues and expressed regret about its recently announced plan to launch a missile in April. The Ministers share the strong view that such a launch would be a serious violation of UN Security Council Resolutions 1695, 1718, and 1874. The Ministers demand that the DPRK not conduct the launch. The Ministers reiterated their condemnation of the DPRK’s uranium enrichment program, its ballistic missile program, and its continuing weapons proliferation activity conducted in violation of UN Security Council Resolutions. They urged the DPRK to abandon all of its nuclear weapons and existing nuclear and ballistic missile programs in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner. They also urged the DPRK to return to full compliance with the NPT and IAEA safeguards obligations and to provide the IAEA with access to individuals, documentation, equipment, and facilities as may be required and deemed necessary by the IAEA to meet its commitments under the 2005 Joint Statement of the Six-Party Talks and under relevant UNSC resolutions, and to take concrete and irreversible steps toward denuclearization. The Ministers expressed concern over human rights violations in the DPRK, highlighted the importance of improved inter-Korean relations, and emphasized the need to address humanitarian issues, including abductions and family reunions.

Burma/Myanmar

The Ministers welcomed recent positive developments in Burma/Myanmar, including the April 1 parliamentary by-election, and other significant steps the Government of Burma/Myanmar has taken toward democratic reform and national reconciliation. They underlined their readiness to assist Burma/Myanmar in advancing reforms and stressed the need for the international community to support these efforts. The Ministers praised the opportunity for all opposition parties, including the National League for Democracy (NLD) led by Aung San Suu Kyi, to participate in the electoral process; progress toward preliminary ceasefires with armed ethnic groups; the release of a significant number of political prisoners; and measures to eliminate forced labor. The Ministers will consider the easing of sanctions to help this country embed reform and fully integrate into international and regional political and economic processes. At the same time, the Ministers called on the Government of Burma/Myanmar to continue reform and reconciliation efforts, and undertake the unconditional release of all remaining prisoners of conscience and the removal of legal conditions placed on those already released; further steps to end all violence in ethnic minority areas; providing unfettered international humanitarian access to conflict zones and internally displaced persons; and severing of military ties with North Korea, in accordance with Burma/Myanmar’s international obligations regarding nonproliferation.

Africa

The Ministers recognized the important progress in economic growth, political stability, and democratization that has been occurring over recent years on the African continent and noted the significant possibilities for continued progress in these areas. Many African states have taken great strides in reducing poverty and generating sustainable development and long-term growth. Political stability is crucial to developing economies, and the Ministers are encouraged by growing democratic governance in a number of countries. However, economic, governance, human rights, and development challenges remain in Africa, and the Ministers remain concerned about the situation in various countries.

The Ministers are particularly alarmed by the military clashes in the region bordering Sudan and South Sudan and call upon the governments of Sudan and South Sudan to exercise maximum restraint and protect civilians, urging both governments to abide by the principles of territorial integrity, inclusive governance, and non-interference in internal affairs. The Ministers called for the immediate cessation of bombing of civilian areas and to end support for armed opposition groups. They affirmed the need for both countries to redouble their efforts, with the help of the African Union High-Level Implementation Panel, to reach a settlement on the remaining post-Comprehensive Peace Agreement issues that include oil, citizenship, borders, and the final status of Abyei and emphasized that resolving the violence in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile (“the Two Areas”) will contribute to reaching settlement on these issues. They expressed concern over the escalating humanitarian situation in the Sudanese border states of the Two Areas, reiterating the grave urgency of delivering humanitarian aid in accordance with international law and guiding principles of emergency humanitarian assistance. They also expressed concern over the continued cycle of intercommunal clashes in South Sudan which have caused tremendous suffering and death. In that regard, the Ministers urged the Government of South Sudan to improve its
security sector capabilities, intensify outreach to communities facing intercommunal conflict, and champion mediation and reconciliation efforts between parties, including youth and rebel groups, to prevent further violence. They also invited parties in Sudan to foster the implementation of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur and urged peace negotiations between the Government of Sudan and all non-signatories.

The Ministers stressed the primary responsibility of Somalia’s Transitional Federal Government to end the transition by August 2012 as agreed in the Roadmap in the Garowe Process. They encouraged all Roadmap signatories to redouble their efforts, with the support of the UN Political Office for Somalia and the international community, to implement the key benchmarks agreed to during the two Garowe Conferences in December 2011 and February 2012, and to ensure that the political process is inclusive and representative. They welcomed the communiqué agreed to at the 23 February London Conference on Somalia, which urged the TFG and Somali regional entities to end the transition. The next international meetings, among them the Istanbul Conference and the Rome International Contact Group, will be important occasions to maintain the momentum to end the transition and move on to a new phase of governance in Somalia. They called upon the international community to act as needed against spoilers to the peace process as appropriate. The Ministers commended the efforts of the AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), acknowledged the sacrifice made by soldiers who died for the sake of a peaceful Somalia, and welcomed UN Security Council Resolution 2036 which increases AMISOM’s troop ceiling, enables AMISOM to expand operations beyond Mogadishu, and requires states to enact bans on the import and export of Somali charcoal. While recognizing the contributions already given by some states, the Ministers call on nations, including new donors, to increase their support to AMISOM and the Somali National Security Forces. The Ministers reiterated their firm condemnation of maritime piracy and armed robbery at sea off the coast of Somalia and called for the TFG to enact counterpiracy legislation, as agreed to in the Roadmap. The Ministers also expressed concern about the obstruction of humanitarian work inside Somalia by the terrorist group Al-Shabaab.

The Ministers expressed deep concern over the escalation of tension between Ethiopia and Eritrea. The Ministers call on the parties to avoid any acts that would increase tensions, adhere to the general principles of international law, respect the commitments they made in the Algiers Agreement, and engage directly on the border impasse and other issues that prevent normalized relations and aggravate regional instability.

The Ministers strongly condemn the continuing acts of violence in Nigeria which have been attributed to both the extremist group Boko Haram and ongoing intercommunal conflict. They urged Nigerian authorities to hold accountable those responsible for these attacks while protecting innocent civilians. They stressed the necessity of a comprehensive development plan to address urgent socio-economic needs in northern Nigeria and to ensure that area benefits from the country’s rapid economic growth. They condemn attempts by those who seek to inflame Muslim-Christian tensions.

The Ministers welcomed the April 6 framework agreement returning Mali to civilian and constitutional rule under an interim government led by National Assembly President Diacounda Traore. The Ministers expressed their appreciation for the ongoing leadership of the Economic Community of West African States to mediate a solution to the political crisis, and acknowledged its efforts to explore options to restore peace and security to Mali. The Ministers reinforced their support for the territorial integrity of Mali, denounced statements of independence by armed groups in northern Mali, and urged all parties to ceasefire and engage in political talks. They expressed their deep concern for the deteriorating situation in northern Mali and the implications the current crisis has for the wider Sahel region, including the impending humanitarian crisis. The Ministers called upon states in the region to strengthen cooperation to tackle common humanitarian, security, and development challenges. They also urged regional organizations and the international community to support efforts of the states in the region to respond to humanitarian crises.

The Ministers expressed concern regarding irregularities documented in the November 2011 presidential and legislative electoral process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The Ministers call on Congo authorities, including the National Independent Electoral Commission, to dramatically improve Congo’s electoral processes, beginning with the upcoming provincial and local elections, and to engage in dialogue with all political parties and civil society so as to foster a political consensus for future elections. The G8 supports efforts by the international community to work with the Electoral Commission to prepare recommendations for broad electoral reform.

The Ministers took note of progress achieved in the implementation of the Roadmap since last September in Madagascar and would like to encourage the Transitional authorities and all Malagasy signatories to remain committed to its implementation. They wish to underline the importance for the international community to go ahead in supporting the efforts already made with a view, in particular, to assisting in the holding of the forthcoming elections.

The Ministers welcomed the end of the post electoral crisis in Cote d’Ivoire and the holding of the parliamentary elections and commend President Ouattara’s commitment in addressing the challenges Cote d’Ivoire faces, in particular national reconciliation, fighting against impunity, security sector reform, and restoring law and order throughout the country.

The Ministers congratulated President-elect Sall on his victory in Senegal’s March 25 elections, and pledged to work closely with his government and with the people of Senegal to ensure continued progress and lasting peace in the region. They also applauded the Senegalese people for their civic engagement.

**Food Security and Nutrition**

Ministers welcomed the productive partnership with African and other governments globally under the historic L’Aquila
Food Security Initiative, which supports country-led efforts to assure sustainable food security and improved nutrition. Donor and partner government investments in agricultural development have proven to be one of the most effective means to promote broad-based economic growth, especially when they are nutrition-sensitive and target smallholder farmers and women. Ministers observed that lasting gains in global food security require mobilizing private sector resources in a responsible manner in addition to public assistance in agriculture and related sectors. Ministers also noted the particular leverage provided by strategies and policies that specifically improve nutrition during the 1,000 days-window between pregnancy and a child’s second birthday. The Ministers agreed that the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) movement merits wider participation as a country-led network involving 27 countries coordinating and aligning donors, the private sector and key stakeholders, including small farmers, to address under-nutrition and scale up proven, multi-sectoral interventions.

Afghanistan

The Ministers underlined their strong commitment to the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity, and national unity of Afghanistan. The Ministers recognized the progress made by the Afghan government and people with the support of the international community, while acknowledging that significant work remains to ensure that this progress is sustainable. This includes supporting the development of a sufficient and sustainable Afghan National Security Forces capable of maintaining security and law and order throughout Afghanistan.

The Ministers confirmed that the process leading to reconciliation must be truly Afghan-owned, as well as inclusive, representing the legitimate interests of all the people of Afghanistan. Reconciliation must contain the reaffirmation of a sovereign, stable, and united Afghanistan; the renunciation of violence; the breaking of ties to international terrorism; and the respect for the Afghan Constitution, including its human rights provisions, notably the rights of women.

The Ministers acknowledged the importance of protecting the human rights and fundamental freedoms, including religious freedom, especially of women and minorities, and of expanding opportunities for them to contribute to Afghanistan’s future. The Ministers stressed the importance of full respect for the traditions and religious beliefs of the Afghan people and observance of international human rights obligations and obligations under international humanitarian law, including in relation to the protection of civilians.

The Ministers reaffirmed the agreement reached in Bonn for sustainable levels of financial support, consistent with the Kabul process, toward Afghanistan’s economic development and security-related costs as part of their enduring engagement with Afghanistan through 2014 and into the Transformation Decade (2015-2024). They urge the Afghan Government to make progress in implementing governance and public financial management reforms critical to Afghanistan’s economic sustainability. The Ministers look forward to the ministerial conference on Afghanistan to be held in Tokyo in July 2012, which will be an important opportunity for the international community and Afghanistan to demonstrate mutual long-term commitments to Afghanistan’s sustainable economic development and substantial improvement of governance.

The Ministers welcomed the Bonn International Conference on Afghanistan in December 2011 and its Conference Conclusion as well as the “Istanbul Process on Regional Security and Cooperation for a Secure and Stable Afghanistan” in November 2011. The Ministers noted the positive role that the G8 have played in supporting and promoting regional economic cooperation. The Ministers supported enhanced trade connectivity along historic trade routes to utilize Afghanistan’s economic potential at the regional level. The entire region stands to benefit from a political solution in Afghanistan and an end to the insurgency. The Ministers look forward to the regional ministerial to be hosted by Afghanistan in June 2012 and hope that there will be progress on implementing confidence-building measures that contribute to regional stability, peace, and prosperity, as well as to more effectively counter the threats posed by terrorism and illicit drug production and trafficking. In this context the Ministers welcomed the results of the Third Ministerial Conference of the Paris Pact Partners on Combating Illicit Traffic in Opiates originating in Afghanistan and stressed the need of full implementation of the Vienna Declaration.

The Ministers emphasized the importance of supporting Afghanistan’s transition to a sustainable and inclusive economy including by taking concrete steps to promote private investment by mobilizing relevant development finance institutions, export credit authorities, and other governmental and nongovernmental tools to encourage supporting human and financial capital investments in Afghanistan. At the same time, the Ministers urged Afghanistan to enact reforms to address corruption, enhance rule of law, and foster a business and legal environment conducive to private investment. The G8 Summit at Camp David will be a key opportunity for the G8 to further mobilize commitment to sustainable levels of non-security assistance to Afghanistan after transition in 2014.

Counterterrorism

The Ministers reiterated absolute condemnation of terrorism in all of its forms and manifestations, including the upsurge in hostage-taking as demonstrated by al-Qa’ida in the Islamic Maghreb filling its coffers with ransom money from kidnapping. The Ministers remain concerned about the continued terrorist presence in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Yemen, Somalia, Iraq, the Gaza Strip, and across the Sahel and the Maghreb, as well as the recent attacks in Nigeria and the consequent loss of human lives. They recognized that the complex nature of political transformation in the Middle East and North Africa makes it critical to address the evolving al-Qa’ida terrorist risks. The Ministers underlined the importance of comprehensive counterterrorism strategies and pledged to continue efforts to undermine the capability of al-Qa’ida, its affiliates and adherents, including challenging the false narrative that continues to incite violent extremism around the world. They
reaffirmed their strong commitment to help victims of terrorist acts, who can be powerful voices against terrorism. The Ministers recognize the need to foster good governance, reduce poverty and corruption, improve education, promote respect for religious freedom, and address basic human needs to help undercut terrorist organizations and their supporters. The Ministers emphasized that states need to have the necessary capacities, including in the area of rule of law and the criminal justice sector, to address terrorist threats within their own borders and regions in conformity with applicable international human rights and humanitarian law. They further underscored the central role that the UN must continue to play in global counterterrorism efforts, welcomed the announcement of a UN Counter Terrorism Coordinator, and stressed the importance of implementing the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and relevant Security Council resolutions. The Ministers welcomed the recently launched Global Counter Terrorism Forum (GCTF) and its early achievements. In the context of the GCTF, the Ministers noted with appreciation the offer by the United Arab Emirates to open an international center devoted to training, dialogue, collaboration, and research to counter violent extremism.

Transnational Organized Crime

The Ministers asserted that transnational organized crime (TOC) distorts and damages the global economy and erodes stability, fuels corruption, and undermines good governance around the world. TOC continues to expand in size, scope, and influence, and it poses a significant threat to security and development. Today’s criminal networks are fluid and sophisticated, striking new alliances with other networks around the world and engaging in a wide range of illicit activities in order to amass large profits. In some regions, terrorist groups have increasing opportunities to develop partnerships of convenience with organized criminal networks, with possible links to drug trafficking, human trafficking, weapons smuggling, money laundering, piracy, and kidnap for ransom. The Ministers affirmed support for collective efforts to mobilize international resources to identify, prevent, disrupt, and dismantle TOC, as well as the links, illicit pathways, or connections which exist in some cases between criminal networks and terrorist organizations. To these ends, Ministers underlined the importance of depriving TOC of the proceeds of crime. The Ministers further recognized that the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) commits states to collective action and international cooperation against organized crime and reiterated their commitment to redouble efforts to assist countries to ratify and implement the UNTOC.

Maritime Security

The Ministers emphasized that maritime security is a critical enabler of economic development, trade, and regional stability. The Ministers remain committed to freedom of navigation, unimpeded lawful commerce, and the peaceful resolution of disputes based upon international law. The Ministers reiterated their firm condemnation of maritime piracy and armed robbery at sea. The Ministers expressed their commitment to pursue international cooperation aimed at setting appropriate and globally shared standards of action to combat the threat, which are consistent with international law and the respect of the internationally recognized principles on jurisdiction in international waters. They recognized that maritime insecurity affects the international community as a whole and can only be effectively addressed through broad, coordinated, and comprehensive national and international efforts, along with the strengthening of coastal states’ as well as regional organizations’ capabilities. Noting the responsibilities which lie also on coastal states to prevent and suppress maritime crime, the Ministers stressed the importance of strengthening the capacities of coastal states (i.e. maritime capacities as well as prosecution and detention capacities), including key legal capacities to uphold relevant norms of international law. The Ministers noted the importance of continuing to work, including within the Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia, on the issue of prosecution of suspected pirates, including continuing to consider, as a matter of urgency, the establishment of specialized anti-piracy courts in Somalia and other states in the region with international participation and support for criminal prosecution of pirates. The G8 will continue its efforts to provide appropriate support to regional States and organizations in enhancing their capabilities to counter piracy and armed robbery at sea in the Gulf of Guinea.

Climate Change and Security

The G8 member states underscore their interest in promoting global growth, prosperity, peace and stability; recognize climate change as a contributing factor to increased security risks globally; and intend to continue to work domestically and multilaterally to address climate change. In Presidential Statement 2011/15, the President of the UN Security Council stated that “the Security Council expresses its concern that possible adverse effects of climate change may, in the long run, aggravate certain existing threats to international peace and security.” The G8 fully support the decision of the Parties to the UNFCCC to launch a process to develop a new climate change agreement applicable to all Parties. The G8 notes that international climate policy and sustainable economic development should be mutually reinforcing in order to limit negative security implications of climate change.

Human Rights

The Ministers reaffirmed that peace and security, development, and human rights, including religious freedoms, are the interlinked and mutually reinforcing pillars of the UN system. Violence related to racism, religious intolerance, and extremism undermines the enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms, and threatens security and stability in many parts of the world. The Ministers emphasized the importance of respecting all human rights and fundamental freedoms that are enshrined in international human rights law, including the freedom of thought, conscience, and religious
believe, and the freedoms of expression and association. The Ministers reaffirm that everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion and that this right includes freedom to choose one's religion or belief. The Ministers call on states to effectively enhance their efforts to protect and promote human rights and fundamental freedoms for all in accordance with their international obligations. The Ministers reaffirmed that prohibition of discrimination on any ground, including race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status, is enshrined in international human rights law. Ministers reaffirmed that human rights and fundamental freedoms are the birthright of all individuals, male and female, including lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender individuals. These individuals often face death, violence, harassment and discrimination because of their sexual orientation in many countries around the world.** The Ministers condemn violence, harassment, and discrimination, wherever it occurs, and whoever perpetrates it, and remind all states of their obligations to promote and protect the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all individuals. The Ministers expressed grave concern about the continued practice of female genital mutilation and early or forced marriage in some parts of the world. The Ministers note that early or forced marriage can reduce the opportunities of young married girls to complete their education, gain comprehensive knowledge, participate in community, or develop employable skills; makes girls more vulnerable to violence; and violate or undermines full enjoyment of human rights of women and girls. The Ministers also strongly condemn the unacceptable and continuing recruitment and use of children in armed conflict, which constitutes an intolerable violation of children’s rights.

**The Russian Federation disassociates itself from this language given the absence of any explicit definition or provision relating to such a group or such persons as separate rights holders under international human rights law.

ANNEX TO THE G8 FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETING CHAIR’S STATEMENT

The G8 continues its efforts, including through G8 Working Groups, to address a number of topics of worldwide importance. In addition to issues discussed at the Meeting of G8 Foreign Ministers on April 11-12, 2012, this annex, negotiated by G8 governments, briefly highlights the continuing positions and actions of the G8 taken to promote security, safety, health, welfare, and prosperity.

Countering Terrorism and Transnational Organized Crime

The G8 recognizes the cutting edge work of the Roma-Lyon Group (RLG) to counter the cross-cutting threats of terrorism and transnational organized crime, including drug trafficking, particularly through the development of practical tools shared with a broad array of international stakeholders, including the United Nations and regional organizations. We encourage the RLG to continue to play a role in strengthening the implementation of the UN al-Qaida sanctions regime, and to promote further initiatives of the Committee pursuant to UNSC resolutions 1267/1989. We welcome the outcomes of the Third Ministerial Conference of the Paris Pact Partners on Combating the Illicit Traffic in Opiates Originating in Afghanistan. The G8 endorses the RLG work to enhance cooperation against terrorism; counter improvised explosive devices; combat illicit drug production and trafficking; prevent the sexual exploitation of children; advance cooperation against the wide and fluid range of emerging crimes, including cybercrime; and, maintain the integrity and implementation of the UN drug control and anti-crime legal frameworks. We take note of the RLG Internal Status Report for 2012 and its Transnational Organized Crime Addendum prepared by the RLG, highlighting recent activities of the Group in countering transnational organized crime and terrorism, and we welcome the prospect of further such reports.

Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding

The G8 welcomes the work of the Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding Experts Group on the subject of Protection of Civilians in UN-mandated peacekeeping operations, including child protection and the prevention and remediation of sexual and gender-based violence, including rape as a weapon of war, and violence against women. G8 experts have discussed these issues with a view to promoting the protection of civilians in UN operations as mandated including by building the capacity of the UN and host nations to undertake their respective protection responsibilities. The G8 recognizes that parties to a conflict bear the primary responsibility for the protection of civilians.

We acknowledge the positive results achieved by the relevant peacekeeping training facilities in G8 countries or supported by them in recipient countries. We also reaffirm the need for further steps aimed at implementing G8 Summit decisions on enhancing peacekeeping/peacebuilding capacities and better correspondence between needs and training.

Nuclear Safety and Security

The G8 welcomes the work of its Nuclear Safety and Security Group. We advocate the strengthening of the international nuclear safety framework, including the emergency preparedness and response system. In this context, the G8 supports the effective, timely, and transparent implementation of the International Atomic Energy Agency’s (IAEA) Action Plan on Nuclear Safety. We recognize that successful implementation of the plan needs a strong commitment at the international level by the Agency, as well as at national levels by each of its Member States. This plan represents an important and comprehensive roadmap for addressing, in the short, medium, and long term, the lessons learned and safety concerns
arising from the March 11, 2011, accident at TEPCO’s Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station, which highlighted the continuing importance that all nations should place on nuclear safety, and on the promotion of the highest levels of nuclear safety. We recognize the importance of the success of the Extraordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety and the Fukushima Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Safety to be held respectively in August and December 2012 for further progress in international nuclear safety. The G8 endorses a strong nuclear safety and security culture in all sectors of the nuclear industry and comprehensive risk and safety assessments. We urge countries that have not yet done so to ratify conventions crucial for the international nuclear safety regime (Convention on Nuclear Safety, Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management, Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident, and Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency). We support robust review of implementation of these conventions and consideration of strengthening them, if necessary, in light of lessons learned from the accident at TEPCO’s Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station and various international initiatives to this end, in order to ensure robust nuclear safety practices. The G8 reaffirms its support for the completion of the Chernobyl nuclear safety projects in Ukraine in a timely and cost-effective manner.

The G8 supports, and through the 24-member Global Partnership, helps implement the 2012 Seoul and 2010 Washington Nuclear Security Summits’ goal of securing vulnerable nuclear materials and radioactive sources around the world as well as the information, technology or expertise required to acquire or use nuclear materials for malicious purposes. The G8 promotes universal adherence to the Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, which are crucial for the international nuclear security regime, as enunciated in the Seoul Communiqué.

Disarmament and Nonproliferation

The G8 reaffirms its unconditional support for the Treaty on the Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and for its universalization. We stress that all NPT Parties have an important stake in the health and vitality of the NPT and we support implementation of the action plan agreed at the 2010 NPT Review Conference to preserve and strengthen the international nonproliferation and disarmament regime. The upcoming 2012 NPT Preparatory Committee is an opportunity to work together to pave the way towards a successful 2015 NPT Review Conference. The G8 reiterates its strong concern about the severe proliferation challenges in the world and its commitment to working to resolve them through diplomatic means. We urge the concerned countries to comply with their international obligations. The G8 reiterates its commitment to the full implementation of UNSCR 1540 by all states and its support to the work of the UNSC 1540 Committee. We urge all countries to comply with their international obligations. We welcome efforts of the states concerned to bring into force the relevant protocols to the existing nuclear-weapon-free zone treaties and support further zones established in accordance with international guidelines, to include an eventual zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery in the Middle East. The G8 stresses the importance of the initiation, within a balanced program of work, without any further delay of negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, and regrets that the Conference on Disarmament once again has been prevented from doing so. The G8 supports the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), and calls upon all states that have not yet done so to sign and ratify the CTBT without further delay. The G8 underlines the fundamental importance of an effective IAEA safeguards system and calls on all States to sign and implement an IAEA Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement (CSA) and an Additional Protocol to CSA as soon as possible. The G8 encourages further progress on the ongoing Arms Trade Treaty negotiations.

Space Security and Sustainability

The G8 supports the work of the UN Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) towards ensuring the long-term sustainability of outer space activities. We also support the implementation of space-related transparency and confidence-building measures for responsible behavior in space, and related activity of the UN Group of Governmental Experts on Transparency and Confidence Building Measures (TCBM) in Outer Space Activities. The G8 acknowledges the initiative taken by the European Union to develop an International Code of Conduct for Outer Space Activities. We reiterate our commitment to carry on activities in the exploration and use of outer space in accordance with applicable international law, including the Charter of the United Nations.

Global Partnership

The G8 commends the Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction as it remains committed to completing priority projects in Russia and takes forward work on the mandate agreed at the Deauville Summit, including in the areas of nuclear and radiological security, biological security, scientist engagement, and the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540. Recognizing the significant international threats posed by the potential use of biological weapons or the deliberate spread of disease, the Global Partnership supports efforts to develop comprehensive approaches to promote global biosecurity as an essential element for building secure and stable nations. Building on the commitments made at the 2010 and 2012 Nuclear Security Summits, the Global Partnership continues to assist nations with nuclear and radiological security, including through nuclear security centers of excellence, promoting international cooperation and a strong nuclear security culture, and advancing information and transportation security. The Global Partnership also continues to pursue the expansion of its membership, as agreed by Leaders in 2011, and welcomes the ongoing participation of relevant international organizations in the global effort to
Continuing Support for Global Health

The G8 supports the call for an AIDS-free generation and efforts to achieve universal access to prevention, treatment, care, and support with respect to HIV/AIDS. The G8 renews and recommits to supporting the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria on the tenth anniversary of its establishment and as the Fund adopts a comprehensive reform agenda. The G8 encourages all donors to meet their pledges, calls upon new donors to join our common efforts to support the Fund, and requests that implementing countries redouble their support for shared responsibility through increased leadership and financing in addressing these critical health challenges.

The G8 reaffirms its commitment to implementing the Muskoka Initiative and to global efforts to improve maternal, newborn, and child health in developing countries by delivering comprehensive interventions, including at the community level, across the continuum of care. We will also support major international efforts to reduce early childhood deaths and generate the leadership and resources needed to increase access to family planning to enable women to choose whether, when, and how many children they have. We urge accountability and action addressing key needs.

The G8 likewise reaffirms its support to the Global Polio Eradication Initiative and calls for the political and financial support to implement the Polio Emergency Action Plan 2012-2013. The G8 urges continued collaboration to accelerate progress on controlling and eliminating neglected tropical diseases. The G8 also reaffirms its resolve to accelerate reductions in preventable childhood deaths by increasing equitable access to routine immunization and life saving vaccines through the GAVI Alliance.

Strengthening health systems on a comprehensive and sustainable basis is crucial for improving global health. We are well aware that our global support has to rely on countries’ health systems to become effective – we therefore reiterate our intentions to provide support in line with internationally agreed aid effectiveness principles, including shared and mutual responsibility, aligned to national efforts of health systems strengthening.

G8 nations recognize that the 21st century marks a turning point in the history of global health. Advancements in science and increasing international and multisectoral collaboration have resulted in rapid improvements in disease surveillance and response, and in reducing the risk of outbreaks, irrespective of origin or source. We therefore call on all nations to place a priority on implementing the World Health Organization International Health Regulations (IHR 2005). This includes collaborating with others to develop and strengthen core public health capacities to prevent, detect, report, and respond to these public health emergencies of international concern. The cooperation of others on this priority is essential to the sustainable development of nations.