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Request for the inclusion of a supplementary item in the agenda of the sixty-seventh session

Observer status for the European Organization for Nuclear Research in the General Assembly

Letter dated 16 August 2012 from the Permanent Representatives of France and Switzerland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Pursuant to rule 14 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, we have the honour to request the inclusion, in the agenda of the sixty-seventh session of the General Assembly, of a supplementary item entitled "Observer status for the European Organization for Nuclear Research in the General Assembly".

Pursuant to rule 20 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, this request is accompanied by an explanatory memorandum (annex I) and a draft resolution (annex II).

We should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annexes circulated as a document of the General Assembly.

(*Signed*) Gérard **Araud**
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France to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Paul **Seger**
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Annex I

Explanatory memorandum

European Organization for Nuclear Research

1. The European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN), an intergovernmental organization founded in 1954, is located in both Swiss and French territory (with its headquarters in Geneva). The convention that established CERN in 1954 clearly defines its main purposes: "The Organization shall provide for collaboration among European States in nuclear research of a pure scientific and fundamental character … The Organization shall have no concern with work for military requirements and the results of its experimental and theoretical work shall be published or otherwise made generally available." Today, CERN is a major particle physics research institution; its mission can be described using the following keywords: research, innovation, education and dialogue between different cultures.

– Research: the aim of the institution's scientific programmes is to expand the frontiers of knowledge; the results are public.

– Innovation: to achieve its research objectives, CERN is constantly developing new techniques for its particle accelerators and detectors; the results sometimes have important applications in other fields (e.g. medicine and communications).

– Education: CERN is committed to disseminating as widely and freely as possible the scientific and technical knowledge that it develops.

– Dialogue: CERN welcomes scientists from all over the world, who work together regardless of their nationality or the nationality of their institution of origin. Its impact on society thus exceeds the results of its scientific programmes.

The dissemination of information regarding the mission of CERN and its impact on society is another key component of the communication and awareness-raising policy followed by the institution. Particular effort is made to communicate with the general public, the local and international media, academic circles and decision-makers, in order to foster greater understanding of the importance of science for the progress of society.

2. In its decision 49/426, the General Assembly decided that the granting of observer status in the General Assembly should in the future be confined to States and to those intergovernmental organizations whose activities cover matters of interest to the Assembly. CERN is an intergovernmental organization, since:

– It was established in accordance with an international convention, the Convention for the Establishment of a European Organization for Nuclear Research.

– Its members are States.

– It is financed by those States.

3. When it was founded in 1954, CERN had 12 member States. Although membership was initially limited to European States, the CERN Council decided in June 2010 that all States would be entitled to become members, regardless of their

geographical location. Today, the following 20 States are members of CERN: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. In addition, Romania is a candidate for accession; Israel and Serbia are associate members in the pre-stage to membership; Cyprus, Slovenia and Turkey are applicant States; Brazil and Ukraine have submitted applications for associate membership; and the Russian Federation has stated that it is ready to start the process of becoming an associate member. India, Japan, the Russian Federation, the United States of America, Turkey, the European Commission and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) have observer status in the Council.

4. The CERN Council is the institution's supreme authority. It is responsible for all important decisions. It supervises CERN's activities in scientific, technical and administrative areas. The Council approves the programmes of activities, adopts budgets and reviews expenditure. Each of the 20 member States is represented on the Council by two official delegates, one of whom represents his/her country's authorities and the other its national scientific interests. Each member State has one vote and most decisions are taken by a simple majority, although in practice the Council seeks to achieve as broad a consensus as possible.

Advantages of granting observer status to the European Organization for Nuclear Research

5. The activities of CERN cover matters of interest to the General Assembly. The actions of the two bodies are complementary, particularly in areas such as the dissemination of scientific knowledge, education, knowledge transfer and capacity-building in developing countries.

6. CERN can contribute to the activities of the United Nations through its knowledge of particle physics and related technologies, and the United Nations system can enable broader and more effective dissemination of the knowledge developed at CERN. Both institutions actively promote dialogue between different cultures and propose specific models for peaceful cooperation on objectives that benefit societies as a whole. In this context, CERN can make a contribution through the models for scientific cooperation that it has developed since it came into existence almost 60 years ago. The universal character and the scope of the United Nations would allow CERN to be active and have an impact in regions other than those where its member States are located. The CERN-UNESCO educational projects under way in African developing countries are an illustration of this.

7. There are already close ties between CERN and the United Nations. The particularly strong relations that exist between CERN and UNESCO date back to 1953, when CERN was founded under the auspices of UNESCO. A cooperation agreement has been in place since 1956, and, in October 2009, at the UNESCO General Conference, the Directors General of CERN and UNESCO decided to reinvigorate and strengthen their relations. Furthermore, with a view to benefiting from the exceptional concentration of international institutions in Geneva, CERN has proposed signing long-term cooperation agreements with some of the large United Nations agencies based there. The aim of these agreements is to identify possible synergies and take appropriate joint initiatives. The reaction has been very

positive and has led to the signing of formal cooperation agreements with the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the World Health Organization (WHO), the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR). CERN is also currently hosting on its premises the UNITAR Operational Satellite Applications Programme, which benefits from the institution's know-how, particularly in the field of information technology infrastructure. Moreover, when the new Director General of the United Nations Office at Geneva was appointed in 2011, the two organizations decided to set up a partnership for cooperation. A cooperation agreement was signed in November 2011. The main interests of the United Nations Office at Geneva are, on the one hand, to link CERN with the general activities of the United Nations in the field of science and society and, on the other, to make use of the knowledge that CERN has developed in information and communication technologies and infrastructure. CERN, meanwhile, wishes to broaden its access to the United Nations system through the United Nations Office at Geneva, particularly at the political level. The Director General of the United Nations Office at Geneva has, on a number of occasions, emphasized the advantages of a close partnership with CERN.

8. Granting CERN observer status in the General Assembly would be a natural development of the current situation. CERN would gain a better understanding of the global activities of the United Nations in areas linked to science, while its contribution to the common goal of fostering greater understanding of the importance of science for society would have a greater impact. The United Nations would benefit from the direct contribution of CERN as a major research institution and from its more coordinated participation in the United Nations, both centrally and through direct relations with its specialized agencies.

Annex II

Draft resolution

Observer status for the European Organization for Nuclear Research in the General Assembly

The General Assembly,

Wishing to promote cooperation between the United Nations and the European Organization for Nuclear Research,

1. *Decides* to invite the European Organization for Nuclear Research to participate in the sessions and the work of the General Assembly in the capacity of observer;

2. *Requests* the Secretary-General to take the necessary action to implement the present resolution.