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Press statement by Belgian Foreign Minister Karel De Gucht on Iran

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The Belgian Foreign Minister, Karel De Gucht, fully aligns himself with the statement on the Iran nuclear issue released by the E3/EU on 12 January 2006. According to the Foreign Minister Belgium has, as a member of the Board of Governors of the IAEA, carefully been following the development of the Iranian nuclear file. Minister De Gucht regrets that Iran seems unwilling to comply with the Board resolutions calling for full transparency and cooperation with the IAEA and the numerous appeals to remedy the confidence deficit stemming from its past clandestine nuclear activities. The Belgian Foreign Minister considers, along with the E3/EU, that the voluntary suspension by Iran of all nuclear enrichment related and reprocessing activities is a key element in this regard as long as the IAEA is not in a position to declare that all nuclear material and activities in Iran have been accounted for. Minister De Gucht highlights that the resolution that was adopted by the IAEA Board in September 2005 found Iran to be in non-compliance with its Safeguards Agreement and declared that the Iranian nuclear file gave rise to questions that were within the competence of the UN Security Council. Since Iran continues to challenge the authority of the IAEA and its Board resolutions, Foreign Minister De Gucht agrees with the E3/EU that the time has come for the UN Security Council to become involved and to use all the potential of its diplomacy, and he fully supports the calling, by the E3/EU of an extraordinary IAEA Board of Governors on 2 and 3 February 2006. "Iran knows what it has to do to revert this situation. Belgium calls on the Iranian leadership to take immediate and positive action", concludes Mr. De Gucht.

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