



Permanent Mission  
of Germany  
to the United Nations  
New York

**Statement by**

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on Disarmament

Mr President,

First of all, I align myself with the statement by the European Union and with the positions of the NPDI.

As we stated in the general debate, for Germany the 2010 Action Plan remains a valid roadmap for the future.

With regard to nuclear disarmament, assessments diverge on how much progress has been achieved. While the numbers of global stockpiles have gone down over the last couple of years, there are still some 16,000 nuclear weapons, of which around 8000 are operational.

Against this backdrop, Germany welcomes the ongoing implementation of the New START Treaty and the unilateral disarmament steps taken by some of the Nuclear-Weapon States. We call upon the United States of America and the Russian Federation to continue their bilateral efforts to constructively engage with each other in order to achieve further reductions. After all, this is precisely what is required under Article VI of the NPT according to the reading of this Article by the International Court of Justice in its 1996 Advisory Opinion.

Germany greatly appreciates the fact that the offer made by President Obama in Berlin two years ago to start a new disarmament round with Russia prior to the complete implementation of New START in 2018 is still on the table. It is an opportunity which must not be lost if progress is to be made towards the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons, to which Germany remains strongly committed. We therefore call upon Russia to respond constructively to President Obama's initiative.

The 2010-Action Plan placed emphasis on transparency, with good reason. Germany welcomes the timely submission of the reports of the P5 in this context. Under the Action Plan,

reporting is an obligation incumbent on all NPT Member States. However, it is hard to deny that the P5 have a particular responsibility to report on their stocks, without prejudice to national security. In the absence of concrete figures, it is almost impossible to ascertain whether headway is being made or to confirm that nuclear stockpiles are not expanding. This Conference should thus reiterate the crucial importance of transparency. The Standard Reporting Forms developed by the NPDI should be revisited to this end. In this context, Germany welcomes the US launch of an International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification.

In the NPT community, many partners are wondering whether the step-by-step-approach is still valid. Some ask whether it might not be more appropriate to accelerate the process towards a world free of nuclear weapons by already starting negotiations on a nuclear weapon ban or convention today. Germany does not share this view.

As Sam Nunn, William Perry, Henry Kissinger and George Shultz put it succinctly: “A world without nuclear weapons will not simply be today's world minus nuclear weapons.” In other words, effective and verifiable nuclear disarmament does not take place in a vacuum, but in a concrete security and political context. For the time being, nuclear weapons are still assigned a role in military doctrines. This also applies to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, of which Germany is a member.

The 2010 NPT Action Plan is based on a gradual approach. Its Action 5 lists important steps which should be taken, such as a further reduction of the role of nuclear weapons in military doctrines and the issue of de-alerting. All of these measures presuppose trust between partners and a cooperative setting based on reciprocity. After the illegal annexation of Crimea by

Russia and in the course of the Ukraine crisis, considerable trust has been lost. This is also true with regard to the so-called Negative Security Assurances, which suffered a heavy blow after the breach of the Budapest Memorandum, which guaranteed the territorial integrity of Ukraine. We are also concerned about repeated statements by Russian officials implying a possible use of nuclear weapons. Such statements do not help rebuild trust! In the present, difficult climate, it is also of paramount importance that disarmament and non-proliferation commitments under existing treaties are honoured, including the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty, which is a crucial element of Euro-Atlantic security. In this connection, Germany calls on Russia to preserve the viability of the INF Treaty by ensuring full compliance.

Against this sobering backdrop, this Conference should help rebuild trust in the implementation of the NPT Action Plan with its detailed proposals for all three pillars. From Germany's perspective, this would also specifically help address the concerns about the catastrophic humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons' detonations expressed during the three international conferences on this issue. The upcoming commemorations of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki are stern reminders of why this issue is so important.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The interpretation of Article VI has been a topic of intense debate, particularly during the current review cycle. Germany interprets the Article as a duty to engage with a view to achieving concrete and verifiable results. Article VI is thus much more than just an appeal. Furthermore, the obligations of all NPT parties under Article VI are at least partially spelled

out in Consensus Documents agreed at Review Conferences. Some of these obligations require further negotiation and consequently cannot be achieved unilaterally. Others, such as the ratification of the CTBT, can be brought about without the corresponding engagement of other States. It is highly regrettable that the CTBT has not yet entered into force in spite of the overwhelming support for this goal from both the 2000 and 2010 Review Conferences. The entry into force of the CTBT would be in the security interest of all states. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, there is no place for nuclear testing! Germany welcomes the fact that the International Monitoring System has already proven its effectiveness by detecting nuclear tests. States Signatories must increase the political will and provide adequate resources to complete the verification regime. Germany is proud to be the third largest contributor to the important work of the CTBTO.

It is also highly regrettable that, in spite of the consensus achieved at NPT Review Conferences, negotiations on a Treaty banning the production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices have not yet begun. The Group of Governmental Experts, of which Germany is proud to have been a member, has done a large amount of important groundwork to pave the way for these negotiations, which should begin as soon as possible.

In conclusion, we are looking forward to an intense and honest debate about the implementation of the 2010 Action Plan on nuclear disarmament. As no document is perfect, Germany is open to discussing ideas on how to supplement or update it where necessary.

Thank you.