

**The Federal Republic of Germany**

**Statement by**

**Ambassador Rolf Nickel**

**Commissioner of the Federal Government for Arms Control and  
Disarmament**

**at the**

**Seventh Review Conference of the Biological and Toxin Weapons  
Convention**

**Geneva**

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Mr. President,

Allow me to begin by congratulating you on your election as President of the 7<sup>th</sup> Review Conference of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention. In exercising this difficult task, you can count on the full support of my delegation.

Germany associates itself with the common position adopted by the EU on July 18, 2011 which will be further elaborated by the delegation of the EU later in the conference.

This 7<sup>th</sup> Review Conference is an important opportunity to revisit and reaffirm the Convention in its totality, especially after the last Review Conference and its successful consolidation efforts from which our work has greatly benefited. I am sure that Delegations to this Conference share this sentiment and are fully aware of the responsibility that we all bear in preparing the third intersessional process.

This Conference concludes a five-year period with a challenging work programme covering a wide range of complex issues.

We believe that the Seventh Review Conference will help to build consensus on the need for States Parties to engage in an even broader range of activities if they are to prohibit and prevent illegitimate purposes for modern biology.

States Parties need to have a comprehensive idea of what is done under their jurisdiction, and how to control it.

This Conference will emphasize the need to further develop the BTWC into a more robust regime.

Mr. President,

effective national implementation of the Convention is crucial for the global success of the BTWC. My delegation would like to point out that Germany has fully transferred and implemented all obligations resulting from the BTWC into national law.

Germany ratified the Biological Weapons Convention on 21 February 1983. At that time, national legislation, which fulfilled the obligations under Article I of the Convention prohibiting biological weapons activities, had already been in place since 1955.

Since then our legislation has undergone a number of changes and amendments, all aimed at making the BTWC an effective tool.

Germany's laws and regulations are fully listed in the legislative database of the Committee pursuant to UNSCR 1540.

We would like to underline the importance of benefiting from this database, which we consider very useful for BTWC purposes.

The Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) which have been politically agreed upon in order to increase transparency among States Parties continue to be of great importance. Germany has continuously demonstrated extraordinary commitment to adapting and developing this very important tool further.

We strongly encourage all States Parties who have not yet done so to participate in the annual exchange of CBMs. We support the idea of taking a fresh look, during this Conference, into ways to enhance the CBM process, above all to review the format of the CBMs.

We are aware that, currently, there is no consensus on the issue of verification. However, we consider this issue to be a central element of a complete and effective disarmament and non proliferation regime. Nevertheless, we are ready to work toward options that could achieve similar goals.

Mr. President,

In the run-up to the Seventh Review Conference numerous States Parties, including Germany, organised meetings at Wilton Park, Beijing, Montreux, Berlin and The Hague to develop key issues for the Conference.

One of the key issues being addressed again was the question of how confidence building measures relate to compliance. Speaking in the context of a national statement, we understand the implementation of the Convention's provisions to be a national responsibility. Providing information under the Confidence Building Measures on national implementation will make a State Party's activities transparent and contribute to building confidence.

Confidence Building Measures, on the other hand, do not provide tools to address compliance concerns.

We expect the 7<sup>th</sup> Review Conference to address these issues and to enable us to formulate recommendations guiding our work during the next intersessional process.

Scientific and technological cooperation, as laid down in Art. X of the Convention, is of great importance to us. Germany is pleased to report on a multitude of activities in this field. Our activities range from university projects of cooperation in the field of biotechnology to establishing close relations between the major German federal funded research organizations and national Academies of Sciences in several countries. We give financial support to research institutions through the channels of the EU.

Mr. President,

Germany does not interpret the requirements as set out in Article X in a narrow sense, but understands cooperation and assistance in the wider perspective of Official Development Assistance (ODA), as defined by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Germany shares the OECD view that assistance and cooperation include activities financed abroad as well as domestic activities.

Education is the basis for future scientific and technological information and material exchange. Without a broad basis of well-trained personnel, sustainable development in the life sciences will not be possible.

Mr. President,

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate Germany's determination to contribute very actively towards a successful outcome of the 7<sup>th</sup> Review Conference. We are confident that concrete results that help strengthen the BTWC can be achieved. In working towards this goal I would like, on behalf of Germany, to express our full support to you and wish you, Mr. President, distinguished delegates and other representatives, patience with each other, a productive work atmosphere and good luck for our common efforts during the next three weeks.

Thank you, Mr. President.