



Permanent Representation  
of the Federal Republic of Germany  
to the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva

Statement

by

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Permanent Representative of Germany to the Conference on Disarmament

Geneva, 12 February 2013

*--Check against delivery--*

Mr. President,

My delegation associates itself fully with the statement of the European Union. I will come back to its topic in a moment.

Mr. President,

Let me start by congratulating you on the assumption of the presidency of the CD. You know that you can count on my personal and my delegation's full support. As your immediate predecessor I continue to feel a particular duty to assist you in your endeavours. I commend you for the excellent way in which you have conducted your work.

Let me also briefly acknowledge your and colleagues' expression of appreciation for what we tried to achieve in the course of the German presidency last year.

And last but not least let me extend a warm welcome to all newly arrived colleagues. When I delivered my first statement in this chamber three and a half years ago, just a few weeks after the work programme CD/1864 had been adopted by consensus, I would not have imagined that by the time I will be leaving, which will be in a couple of months, the CD might still not be back to substantive work. I very much hope that the experience at least of those colleagues who have joined us this year will be a different one!

Mr President,

It has been confirmed that the DPRK conducted a third nuclear test in the early hours of this morning. Germany condemns this test in the strongest possible terms as another blatant breach of resolutions of the UN Security Council. We welcome that the Security Council will meet today in an emergency session. The international community must give a clear answer to this renewed provocation.

Mr. President,

In your opening statement of 22 January you evoked one of the great figures in the German literary tradition of fairy tales, the Grimm brother's *Sleeping Beauty*, and you reminded us of the fact that it took one hundred years for the prince to reawaken her with his kiss.

I wish to commend you and your team for the courageous effort you are undertaking to end the long sleep of the Conference on Disarmament earlier than that.

But more than 15 years of sleep is a pretty long sleep too, particularly for a body which is meant to contribute to international security and which uses up a lot of resources.

Looking back over the last two to three years, one cannot but note a substantial rise in frustration. One might even say a sense of anger, at the ongoing impasse in the CD.

This finds expression in various ways: I would refer to the countless statements in which the deadlock of the CD has been lamented for years. I would refer to the reports the CD dispatches to the UN General Assembly – even if the sense of frustration is somewhat toned down in these consensus documents; this appears to be the result of the fact that there are some member states, who do not seem to have too much of a problem with the status quo in the CD. And finally, I would refer to the resolutions adopted in the UNGA after debate in the First Committee, which speak a clear language, namely that the international community wants us to do better!

The last First Committee adopted even *three* resolutions by large majorities which fall more or less directly into the CD's realm and which clearly signify the growing impatience with the impasse in the CD:

- Firstly, the Canadian led Resolution 67/53 on a "*Treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices*" will establish a *Group of Governmental Experts* to deal with aspects of this matter, which is a direct consequence of the situation in which one single member state has been objecting to taking this matter up in negotiations within the CD;
- secondly, the Austrian, Mexican and Norwegian led Resolution 67/56 will establish an *Open Ended Working Group* open to all UN member states "*to develop proposals to take forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations for the achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons*". Once again, this is a matter which clearly belongs to the remit of the CD;
- and finally, as a result of the Indonesian led Resolution 67/39 the UN General Assembly will hold a *high-level meeting on nuclear disarmament* on 26 September this year, an initiative which is clearly meant to bring the nuclear disarmament agenda forward.

And last but not least one should not forget our "own" CD Resolution 67/72, which calls upon the CD to "*explore possibilities for overcoming its ongoing deadlock of well over a decade by adopting and implementing a balanced and comprehensive programme of work at the earliest possible date during its 2013 session.*"

The message of all these resolutions taken together is abundantly clear: The international

community expects us in the CD to get our act together.

Mr. President,

The German delegation commends you not only for making another attempt to build consensus around another draft programme of work, but in particular for the fact that it is your intention to submit CD/1948 for adoption.

As we have seen in recent years this does not happen often, but it is important that this does indeed happen. For those who try to follow what we are doing here – governments, the general public, civil society and NGOs alike - it is important to get a transparent picture of what is actually going on here.

The draft programme before us builds on previous attempts, in particular CD/1864 of May 2009. It contains new elements which one would hope should make it easier for member states, which so far had difficulties with the approach taken since CD/1864.

Let me focus on two elements only:

- The fact that the issue of nuclear disarmament and the issue of banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons purposes is to be treated in one single Working Group is in my understanding meant to alleviate concerns about too much prominence being given to the latter subject in earlier draft programmes of work;
- and secondly, the fact that the present draft speaks only about “*beginning substantive work towards a treaty banning the production of fissile material*”, whereas CD/1864 had clearly stipulated “*to negotiate*” such a treaty, is a significant move, which one hopes will not go unnoticed.

If this programme of work is adopted today, we can begin substantive work in the CD next week, thus overcoming an embarrassing situation for the entire international community, which has been going on far too long. Everything is in place: The draft decision document CD/1948 defines clear taskings, it contains clear time schedules and it makes provision for chair- and coordinator positions. Let me express in passing my appreciation for the confidence by being named once again as one of the Chairpersons and Coordinators respectively.

Mr President,

After the experience of the Cold war with its absurd build-up of nuclear weapons, one can only hope that the world community as a whole has learnt its lesson to the extent that states do not aspire to engage in nuclear arms races once more, be it on the global or the regional level. At the end of the day nuclear arms races make no-one more secure, on the contrary, and they are a colossal waste of resources, which are much more needed elsewhere to improve the security of states und the well-being of people.

If one wants to put an end to nuclear arms races, the first obvious step must be to stop the production of the material needed for nuclear weapons and to deal with all related matters in this context, like e.g. adequate verification methods.

Negotiations for such a treaty will take time, but we must not continue to postpone the *beginning* of this process year after year.

To those who may still hesitate to sign on, one needs to say this: What you are being asked to do today is only *not to stand in the way of a process to begin* substantive work on a treaty dealing with the raw material of nuclear weapons!

So, one should not create the impression as if anyone was asked today or tomorrow to sign on to a treaty ending the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons purposes. To join a consensus does *not* mean to have to explicitly say “yes”, *but only not to say “no”!*

What is at stake here is not to prevent the entire international community any longer from exploring provisions of a treaty, which in one way or another will have to be the first step to reach the ultimate objective of a world free of nuclear weapons, an objective we all share.

I thank you.