UN Secretary-General’s report on ways and means of promoting the role of women in disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control

Germany’s national contribution

In operative paragraph 13 of its resolution 77/55 “Women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control” adopted on 13 December 2022, the General Assembly “requests the Secretary-General to seek the views of Member States on ways and means of promoting the role of women in disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control and to report to the General Assembly at its seventy-ninth session on the implementation of the present resolution;”

I. Introduction

Working towards equality for women and girls worldwide and attending to the particular concerns of marginalised groups remains a core priority of the German government. Germany welcomes the implementation of resolution 77/55 “Women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control”, including by the Secretary-General seeking views of Member States on ways and means of promoting the role of women in disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control.

Germany attaches highest priority to resolution 77/55 and advocates for its implementation. In the field of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control Germany strives to mainstream a gender perspective in international efforts to strengthen disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control instruments, to ensure gender-sensitivity of all projects that receive German financial support and to increase women’s participation in relevant decision-making fora.

II) Working assumptions and challenges

Feminist and humanitarian movements have played a formative role in the development of arms control standards and conventions. Germany’s Feminist Foreign Policy is obliged to this tradition, and strives for gender-sensitive arms control and disarmament. Its core concerns include human security and protecting the civilian population, particularly the most vulnerable groups, from indiscriminate violence, and protecting all people from inhumane weapons systems and weapons of mass destruction.

Against this background, Germany is convinced of the relevance of a feminist foreign policy perspective in arms control: Women, children, elder people and civilians can be particularly affected by small arms, land mines, cluster munitions and weapons of mass destruction – during, after and sometimes outside of military combat. For example, women and girls bear a
significantly higher lifetime risk of developing cancer due to the radioactive fallout from a nuclear explosion. As emerging disruptive technologies play an increasingly important role in armed conflict, the use of Artificial Intelligence in the military domain raises relevant questions with regard to gender aspects, as technology can be subjected to underlying social biases, e.g. in data sets used to train AI algorithms. Moreover, women are still underrepresented in arms control policy processes.

Germany advocates for further progress in efforts to ensure inclusion of women and those particularly affected by armed conflict in national, European and international arms control policy processes. Intensified research into the gender-specific impact of weapons systems, especially nuclear weapons, is needed, as well as gender-disaggregated data in order to understand the specific consequences that the use of a weapon system may have on particular groups.

II. Gender-sensitive arms control in practice

Germany remains fully committed to integrating the perspectives of women and marginalised groups into our world-wide work for peace and security. Germany commits to continue to contribute actively to international efforts towards strengthening gender-sensitive approaches in non-proliferation, disarmament and arms control, including humanitarian arms control, and advocating for a safe world without nuclear weapons.

Our efforts include engagement in the following areas:

- **Gender-sensitive project work in arms control:** We call upon our project partners in the realm of small arms control to delve into gender-related aspects in their grant applications and to elaborate how their proposed project activities would contribute to implementing the WPS agenda. We encourage our partners to have at least a 30% share of women in project activities.
- Germany sees particular value in gender-sensitive approaches as small arms and light weapons (SALW) are concerned. Germany is among the founding members of the GENSAC network and continues to support it.
- **Gender-based analysis:** We are improving the data available for gender-sensitive small arms control through a project we are supporting and that is being implemented by the NGO Small Arms Survey.
- **Strengthening humanitarian arms control:** We took over the 2023 Presidency of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention in order to achieve progress in implementing and universalising said Convention. We oppose impunity for state and non-state actors that use chemical or biological weapons and will do our utmost to hold them accountable.
for their crimes. We are continuing our efforts against cluster munitions and the use of explosive weapons in densely populated areas. We support efforts to recognise and compensate the victims of nuclear tests.

- With regard to ongoing international discussions about the responsible military use of AI we are advocating to take gender implications stronger into account. Jointly with like-minded partners, Germany is actively engaged to foster more substantive discussions on gender aspects by the CCW Group of Governmental Experts on questions related to emerging technologies in the area of lethal autonomous weapons systems (LAWS). We intend to further intensify our engagement.

- Germany supports UNIDIR’s Gender and Disarmament Programme and highly welcomes UNIDIR’s important and active engagement. We particularly commend the Women in AI fellowship launched by UNIDIR in 2024, empowering women from all over the world with relevant knowledge on AI.

- In order to strengthen a gender-sensitive approach to arms control and non-proliferation, the German Bundeswehr Verification Centre has gradually included the aspect of gender-sensitive arms control in its curriculum regarding the UN Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW), especially the training on Weapons and Ammunition Management and the SALW Assessment Visit training. Germany will further expand the implementation of UNSC Resolution 1325 “Women, Peace and Security” in the context of arms control.

- In the context of the NPT, Germany has in 2022 and 2023 announced that it will support efforts and projects in the field of victims’ assistance and environmental remediation of nuclear tests. Accordingly, the German Federal Foreign Office supports a project by the Centre for Feminist Foreign Policy (CFFP) titled “Towards a feminist plan of action for supporting victims harmed by nuclear testing” that started its work in 2023.