

Main Committee I Statement by the Federal Republic of Germany

Delivered by Amb. Thomas Göbel

Mr. Chair,

Germany congratulates you on your chairmanship of Main Committee I of the 11th NPT Review Conference. We assure you of our full support.

Germany fully aligns itself with the statements made by the European Union.

Mr. Chair,

Despite many crises and changing geopolitical context since the inception of the NPT, the NPT has proven to be a very successful treaty which contributes largely to international stability and security. We need to protect and treasure it.

The challenges today are manifold: Military conflict in the Middle East at the origin of which lie the high international concerns about Iran's non-compliance with its nuclear safeguards obligations and covert nuclear activities. Russia resorts to coercive nuclear rhetoric in its reckless war of aggression against Ukraine. The DPRK proliferation crisis has aggravated even further.

Alongside, many countries question the rationale and intent behind China's build-up of its nuclear arsenal.

Whilst all these developments are certainly not conducive to our ambition to achieve a world without nuclear weapons, we must do everything we can to advance the purpose of the NPT across all its pillars.

Because we know: The NPT remains the only viable way for achieving a world without nuclear weapons.

With regard to this first pillar, nuclear disarmament, I would like to make three points:

Firstly,

we need to clearly re-commit to the NPT and re-affirm its existing obligations. Facing Russia as a very real threat in Europe, Germany has to focus on strengthening its deterrence and defence within NATO and the EU. Our commitment to the NPT remains ironclad. We will continue to work towards our shared goal of a safer world without nuclear weapons.

There is an immanent need to preserve the nuclear test stop norm and strengthen the CTBTO. Expressed concerns that the zero-yield standard may not have been adhered to should be clarified and the test moratorium reconfirmed and adhered to by all Nuclear Weapon States. Transparency and accountability remain key elements of implementing the NPT. Germany is resolved to do this, including as a co-chair of the Stockholm Initiative in Nuclear Disarmament.

Secondly,

we need to adapt to the new realities of an evolving global security context.

On strategic arms control, we support the US approach to reach out to Russia and China aimed at readjusting strategic stability to a changed reality with three states with large nuclear arsenals.

In this evolving reality, Germany puts a strong focus on nuclear risk reduction – not as a substitute for nuclear disarmament, but a necessity to help prevent the worst and to de-escalate in unintended crisis scenarios. This is why with many partners in the group on “Reducing the risk of nuclear conflict”, we put forward concrete proposals to strengthen risk reduction to avoid inadvertent nuclear escalation, let alone nuclear war.

Thirdly,

we have to prepare for the technologies of tomorrow.

We need to address new emerging technologies, including AI and quantum. While they undoubtedly pose risks, they also offer opportunities for adapting, modernizing, and perhaps even revolutionizing arms control, monitoring and verification.

We currently do not know what future nuclear arms control and disarmament agreements will look like. But we will surely need to explore what options there are on the horizon for strong and effective verification.

Germany invests in this field. We are bringing political and physical scientists together for joint research projects and encourage young people to pursue this path. We initiated last year a project called EXPAND, the Expert Panel on Nuclear Disarmament Verification, where we particularly look at nuclear verification.

Mr. Chair,

To conclude:

There are challenges ahead of us. In the interest of preserving our treaty let us look together at where the opportunities are and how they can be amplified on our joint path forward.

We owe it to the NPT.

Thank you.