



**Open-ended Working Group taking forward multilateral disarmament negotiations  
(OEWG)**

**H.E. Ambassador Michael Biontino**  
**Permanent Representative of Germany to the Conference on Disarmament**

**OEWG Report - Explanation of Vote on behalf of Germany**

**Geneva, 19 August 2016**

Mr. Ambassador Thani Thongphakdi,

- We wish to thank you for your hard work and your dedication. We acknowledge the sincere and genuine efforts made by all participants in the Open-ended Working Group to try to arrive at a shared vision of how best to take forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations.
- Germany remains committed to the vision of a nuclear weapons free world. Germany has always been actively engaged in promoting the nuclear disarmament process.
- Germany advocates for a step-by-step approach aiming for conditions that would allow for continuous reduction of nuclear weapons.
- Nuclear disarmament can't happen in a security vacuum. We have to take the current international security environment into consideration.
- Nuclear disarmament remains imperative, not least in order to strengthen the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. This is the cornerstone of the international nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament architecture. Germany's central concern remains the full effectiveness of the NPT in its three pillars.
- An immediate "ban" of nuclear weapons without verification mechanism or restrictions on the production of fissile material bears the risk of weakening the NPT - contrary to the intention of its proponents.
- Nuclear weapons will only disappear when nuclear weapon states will engage in the process. Negotiations of a ban treaty without Nuclear Weapon States will not lead to reductions in the nuclear arsenals. Germany will further engage with the nuclear weapon states to achieve progress.
- Therefore, with deep regret, we do not see ourselves in a position to support the Chair's draft Report as a consensus outcome document but had to oppose when it was submitted

to formal voting. Notably, the Report presents the most controversial proposal, that of convening a conference in 2017 to negotiate a legally-binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, as the key recommendation. We cannot agree to this proposition.

- In short, there are no quick fixes to our common goal of effective, verifiable and irreversible nuclear disarmament to which we are fully committed. We therefore aim for a realistic alternative which we have called „progressive approach“.