



27.10.2016

Explanation of Vote (L.41, “No”)

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Ambassador

**Permanent Representative of Germany to the Conference on
Disarmament**

Mr. Chairperson,

Over the past year, most of the countries assembled here have been engaged in long and often controversial debates about how to make better progress in nuclear disarmament.

Inspired and guided by the overall goal of “global zero”, of a world without nuclear weapons, we spared no effort to search for common ground on how to best advance nuclear disarmament. And let me be crystal-clear, Germany is at the forefront of “global zero” and shares entirely the vision of a nuclear free world.

However, at this point in time we seem to have reached a decisive road mark. A number of countries are calling for immediate negotiations on a treaty prohibiting nuclear weapons. However, this approach seems to be a tempting shortcut; but unfortunately a shortcut that will lead to nowhere. In other words: We cannot see how such a path can bring us any inch closer to concrete nuclear disarmament. On the contrary - such an initiative risks carrying us further away from our joint objective.

One example: Negotiations on a nuclear ban treaty without the involvement of nuclear weapon states will be ineffective. Such an approach will be divisive and counter-

productive to our collective aim. Let us not forget: For nuclear weapons to disappear nuclear weapon states will have to engage in the process.

Another central concern remains the full effectiveness of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) in its three pillars one of which is nuclear disarmament. An immediate "ban" of nuclear weapons without verification mechanisms or restrictions on the production of fissile material bears the risk of weakening the NPT – contrary to the intention of its proponents.

And for these reasons and together with our partners, we are advocating for a concrete, and more realistic alternative to a nuclear weapons' ban treaty.

Our progressive step-by-step approach has identified concrete ways aiming for conditions that would allow for the continuous reduction of nuclear weapons by establishing the confidence and trust needed for such steps. It focuses on many of the elements of the Action Plan agreed at the 2010 NPT Review Conference.

One such important element is progress on restricting the production of fissile material. This is a shared priority of the international community. Together with Canada and the Netherlands we have tabled a resolution on a Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty aimed at facilitating renewed efforts on preparing the ground for negotiations on an FMCT Treaty. This constitutes a concrete and tangible measure towards nuclear disarmament. We hope for broad support

To sum up: we believe that we have compelling reasons to pursue our progressive approach which is geared towards effective, verifiable and irreversible nuclear disarmament and we ask all our partners who share the commitment towards nuclear disarmament to join this effort, also with a view to preparing the substantial elements which will need to be discussed in the upcoming NPT review cycle.