



**Statement
by**

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

**at the First Session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020
Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the
Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons,**

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Cluster II (Non-Proliferation)

Mr. Chairman,

I align myself with the Statement by the EU and the NPDI-positions regarding the second pillar of the Nuclear-Non-Proliferation Treaty.

For at least three decades, there was no doubt that the NPT was a very successful treaty which strengthened the principle of non-proliferation and which prevented many countries from pursuing nuclear options. These days, this overwhelm-mingly positive track record of the non-proliferation pillar of the NPT is sometimes forgotten in the face of debates about whether the nuclear non-proliferation regime is under threat.

There is a need to take these challenges to the NPT seriously, and at the same time remain confident in the accomplish-ments of the NPT in enforcing and preserving the principle of non-proliferation. One way of doing this could be to give more attention to the interplay between the first two pillars of the NPT and the fact that a sound non-proliferation regime is also one of the decisive preconditions for nuclear disarmament and getting closer to a world free of nuclear weapons.

North Korea's continuous and accelerating development of its nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programmes is the most blatant threat to the nuclear non-proliferation regime enshrined in the NPT to date. DPRK has carried out 5 nuclear tests so far and continues to launch ballistic missiles and satellites, thereby violating various UN Security Council resolutions which have called on Pyongyang to dismantle its nuclear programme, prohibited satellite launches and requested North Korea to refrain from ballistic missile test. North Korea must refrain from further nuclear testing, cease immediately all nuclear activities and launches using ballistic missile technology, and abandon all nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programmes " in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner" as required by the relevant UN Security Council resolutions. Urgent action is necessary to increase the pressure on Pyongyang to enter into negotiations and to start addressing the tremendous international concerns about DPRK's illegal nuclear activities. It is key that all diplomatic efforts should aim at the peaceful denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and fully restore the principle of non-proliferation and respect for the NPT.

Even before 2003, DPRK had not been in good standing with the NPT. Many of the problems evolved around DPRK's non-compliance with the Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement it had concluded with the IAEA in 1992. We strongly urge DPRK to promptly return to compliance with the NPT and its IAEA Safeguards Agreement and allow for the return of IAEA inspectors.

It almost goes without saying that a robust nuclear non-proliferation system is based on the IAEA's safeguards system and its effective implementation. The IAEA must have adequate resources and political support to fulfil its safeguards mandates. One of the expectations of the last Review Cycle which has not been fulfilled is to have NPT members decide to strengthen the non-proliferation regime by promoting an IAEA Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement together with an Additional Protocol as the international verification standard, which should be considered when deciding on the supply of nuclear fuel, equipment or technology. We call on all States who have not yet done so to sign and bring into force an Additional Protocol and, where relevant, adopt the modified Small Quantities Protocols.

As the case of North Korea underscores, Germany also continues to see the need for arriving at a common understanding of States parties on how to respond effectively to a State party's withdrawal from the NPT based on Art. X.

Turning to the accomplishments of the non-proliferation pillar, substantial progress was achieved regarding the Iranian nuclear issue during the last NPT Review Cycle: The diplomatic agreement reached between the E3/EU+3 and Iran in July 2015, the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPoA), put an end to a decade-long nuclear dispute with Iran within the logic of the NPT. The JCPoA presents a rare success of diplomacy in a very volatile region: All possible paths to a nuclear bomb for Iran were blocked. Bear in mind: The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty was never called into question during the negotiations

between the E3/EU+3 and Iran. On the contrary: All delegations were clear that the NPT was and had to be the basis of all endeavours.

The JCPoA is not built on trust but on verification: The IAEA's role in monitoring the agreement and reporting to the Board and its Member States is crucial for the building of trust and confidence and for the implementation of the measures related to the relief and lifting of sanctions which the JCPoA foresees in return. Verification is a prerequisite for the build-up and maintenance of trustful relations. The Additional Protocol with its widened scope of inspections whose application by Iran is one important, but – pending ratification - voluntary element of the JCPoA should become the universal gold standard for each and every state.

We reaffirm our strong support for the IAEA's ongoing efforts to verify Iran's compliance with its nuclear-related commitments under the JCPoA. Germany has made available 4.1 Mio. EUR for nuclear verification in Iran (Geneva Joint Plan of Action and JCPOA) so far and commends those states which have equally contributed financially to the crucial monitoring and verification work of the IAEA in Iran so far.

Unfortunately, there is little progress to report with regard to the Syrian case of non-compliance. Germany deplores Syria's ongoing non-compliance with its nuclear safeguards obligations. In light of the disastrous security situation in Syria, concerns about the security of Syria's nuclear assets in terms of material and equipment are high. Syria should cooperate fully with the IAEA by providing access to the information, documentation, sites, material and personnel in Syria that the Agency has requested.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Syria's unresolved nuclear issues in the face of ongoing civil war showcase the risks and challenges emanating from the threat of nuclear terrorism, the proliferation of WMD and regional conflicts. All this adds up to a dangerous combination which needs to be addressed with resolve. We must be aware of these challenges to maintain a sufficient level of nuclear security. No one should assume that the threat only concerns those who actually use nuclear energy. Terrorism does not respect borders. So-called failed states add to the risks of nuclear materials falling out of regulatory control.

The Nuclear Security Summit process has drawn global attention to these challenges. Germany contributed to the process in the field of improving security of radioactive sources and the protection from cyber attacks against nuclear facilities. Much work needs still to be done. We welcome the IAEA's readiness to fulfill its central role with respect to nuclear security and hope that the momentum can be maintained also in the NPT context.

Ladies and gentlemen,

last but not least a few comments on the question of a zone free of nuclear weapons, as well as other WMD and their means of delivery in the Middle East. Germany remains committed to the objective of a Middle East free of WMD and their means of delivery and stands by the pertinent decisions taken in the context of the NPT, notably in the 2010 Action Plan. Germany commends ongoing efforts of the co-sponsors of the 1995 Resolution (the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States) and the League of Arab States on this issue. Germany strongly regrets that, despite these persistent efforts, it has thus far not been possible to convene the Conference. As stated in the 2010 Final Document, it is a prerequisite for a successful meeting that the regional parties engage freely and actively with each other in order to reach consensus on a date and an agenda for the Conference.

Thank you!