

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY!

Statement

by Ambassador Peter Beerwerth

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**at 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 I: Nuclear Disarmament

Mr. Chairman, dear [...],

Germany is fully aligned to the EU Statement. We all agree: The NPT is a landmark treaty and a major achievement of multilateralism; an achievement to preserve and to build on.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The wisdom of this treaty lies in its **careful balance of priorities**: nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear technology. That balance is the basis for its almost universal acceptance. And on the basis of that balance only can we add new chapters to the success story the NPT represents.

The achievements made in the past 50 years to curb nuclear proliferation and multiply the **benefits** of nuclear technology are undisputable. On nuclear disarmament, however, the balance sheet is less clear. We have witnessed substantial, even dramatic **reductions in nuclear arsenals** as compared to cold-war levels. We must not forget these long-term trends and we should not talk it down, all the more as the New START treaty has further reduced deployed strategic warheads, and continues to be implemented to date.

But **reductions have come to a standstill**. The demise of the **INF treaty**, result of Russia's continued non-compliance, undermine attempts to reduce the role of nuclear-capable delivery systems in European security. A number of countries, including non-recognized nuclear-possessor States, **modernize and enhance their nuclear capabilities**. Technological progress furthers nuclear-conventional entanglement. Some say: For decades the risk of an accidental use of nuclear weapons has not been as high as it is today.

These developments call for a careful reflection of the current state of affairs. As the NPT is not viable without its commitment to Article VI, the **2020 Review Conference must demonstrate: Article VI**

matters, not only in declaratory but also in practice terms, by taking concrete steps.

We are **not operating in a vacuum** here. The **2010 Action Plan** provides an ample menu to re-engage on nuclear disarmament. Such re-engagement must be measured against the background of a **challenging security environment**. Needless to say: Reductions in nuclear arsenals do not automatically increase stability and security for all. But the challenges in the security environment must not prevent us from seeking further reductions and from reducing the role of nuclear weapons in doctrines, strategies and policies.

A **roadmap towards nuclear disarmament** should therefore be conceived with realism and should be built around the following clusters.

First: In the current security environment **risk reduction** is the call of the day. Concrete steps towards strategic risk reduction include **regular, systematic and more detailed reporting** by all NWS on their nuclear arsenals as called for in the NPT Action Plan of 2010. This Conference is an excellent occasion for NWS to demonstrate their goodwill and provide the NPT community with a degree of information on their nuclear forces beyond previous reporting standards. We hope this **opportunity for enhanced transparency** will be duly seized.

Strategic risk reduction also requires readiness on the side of the NWS to establish **crisis-proof channels of communication** and renew their **dialogue on nuclear responsibilities**. We value the new impetus to dialogue within the P5 on such pertinent issues like nuclear doctrines. But let me also underline that NNWS have the same legitimate security interest in the specificities of **nuclear doctrines**. We therefore encourage the P5 to broaden their dialogue and reach out to their partners within the NPT community.

In a tense security environment **declaratory restraint** is not only a valuable contribution to stability. It can also re-build or strengthen trust among NWS or between NWS and NNWS. Restraint is a resource to be fully exploited. Against this background, we encourage NWS to carefully examine all options to **re-affirm, formalize or tighten**

existing NSAs or to find other ways to honor their commitment to **reduce the role of nuclear weapons**, as the 2010 Action plan calls for.

Second: We need to lay the **ground for a world free of nuclear weapons**. Perhaps the most important part in that groundwork exercise is **robust and credible verification**. What are the principles that nuclear disarmament verification must be based on? How can procedures for effective multilateral verification be concretely designed? How can non-nuclear-weapon States verify whether a nuclear warhead has been properly dismantled – without gaining access to its blueprints? These are critical questions difficult to answer.

We all the more welcome the **progress** we have made both within the **IPNDV** and the **Group of Governmental Experts**. These works need to be continued. **Germany and France** are jointly hosting a **disarmament verification exercise** in September of this year to provide practical answers to these pertinent questions. For a world without nuclear weapons cannot be achieved and will never be stable without effective multilateral nuclear disarmament verification.

Third: We must do all we can to **preserve and develop the architecture of nuclear arms control**. Let us recognize: Stagnation can turn into erosion. On FMCT and CTBT we have been biding time for far too long. It is high time that we remove the obstacles and start negotiations on a **Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty**. Different views on certain aspects should be reconciled during negotiations, but they must not prevent us from moving ahead. We welcome the consensus report of the high-level FMCT expert preparatory group as a significant contribution for future treaty negotiations.

I should also like to renew our call on all States that have not signed and ratified the **Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty** to do so without further delay – in particular the remaining Annex II States. We all agree: Nuclear testing should be a thing of the past. The critical role that the CTBTO and its verification regime have played in detecting DPRK's nuclear tests can hardly be overrated, and we welcome that the International Monitoring System is almost completed. Foreign

Minister Maas will be pushing for the CTBT's entry into force as co-chair of this year's Article 14 CTBT conference.

Over the past decades **reductions and limitations of nuclear stockpiles** have crucially contributed to security and stability. Effective treaties like **New START** should therefore be preserved. For limitations of the two biggest strategic arsenals not only contribute to European security but also stabilize the global nuclear order. We are convinced that **further nuclear stockpile reductions are possible** without any security losses and we support efforts to create an environment for taking such steps. Foreign Minister Maas has made that point clearly at the recent UNSC meeting in support of the NPT, a meeting that has generated encouragingly strong support to the NPT and all its commitments. Against this background, we encourage notably the P5 to live up their joint responsibility for the future of the NPT.

Ladies and gentlemen,

In times of increasingly divergent positions, we must **preserve the common achievements** we have made. Germany will work hard to do so, individually, within the EU, the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative and as member of the UN Security Council 2019/2020. The NPT is such an outstanding universal achievement. 2020 is the year to **demonstrate its enduring value for the 21st century**.

Thank you for your attention.