General Statement before the vote on Cluster 7: Disarmament Machinery

Mr. Chairman,

As a country which attaches much importance to making progress in the fields of disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation, Germany cannot but deeply regret the stalemate which has prevented the Conference on Disarmament for well over a decade from doing the work it is mandated to do, that is to negotiate and agree new instruments in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation.

Likewise, the persistent lack of tangible results over many years in the United Nations Disarmament Commission is yet another cause for concern to us.

Mr. Chairman,

There is a lot of political will among a vast majority of states to start negotiations in the CD. In fact, in 2009 there was agreement in the CD to start negotiations on an FMCT and also to deal with the other important core issues on the CD agenda in a substantive manner. Unfortunately, it turned out somewhat later that this agreement could not be implemented as a result of procedural manoeuvres of one delegation.

Germany is convinced that the political will still exists today among a vast majority of states to proceed along the lines of the consensus reached in 2009.

Mr. Chairman,

The manner in which the consensus rule has been applied in the CD by virtually turning it into a veto right even on small procedural issues has brought the CD into a situation where each and every single member can nullify the political will of the overwhelming majority of states only to start negotiating processes. I think everyone can see that this is a recipe for enduring stalemate and permanent gridlock. It should be borne in mind that the negotiation of major multilateral treaties in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation has either not started or ended with the adoption with each and everybody on board. In fact, we would in most probability wait for the NPT and the CTBT even today if such a rigid form of the consensus rule had been applied in both instances as is now the case in the Conference on Disarmament.

It is against this background that Germany has fully supported the efforts of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament to revitalize multilateral disarmament.
And it is against this background, Mr. Chairman, that we have followed the various initiatives and attempts which have been made in draft resolutions in this year's First Committee to move the CD forward and to revitalize the multilateral disarmament process with a great deal of interest and sympathy, and we have tried as German delegation as best we could to support initiatives in this field.

We very much hope that the debates we had over these initiatives and draft resolutions will energize the Conference on Disarmament in its 2012 session so as to get it really underway at long last.

If, sadly, Mr. Chairman, this were once again not the case, Germany is confident that the discussions we had here this year have made an important contribution towards laying the basis for remedies to be discussed and decided upon in next year's First Committee of the General Assembly.

I thank you.