Statement by

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German Statement on the Humanitarian Consequences of Nuclear Weapons
During the First Committee’s Thematic Discussion on Nuclear Disarmament

Monday, October 21, 2013
Mr. Chairman,

Let me at the outset congratulate you on your election as the chair of the 1st Committee and assure you of the full support of my delegation to your work.

Germany aligns itself with the statement made by the European Union made earlier during our meeting.

Let me in a national capacity make the following comments.

Germany shares the concern about the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of a use of nuclear weapons. This is one of the reasons why reaching a world without nuclear weapons is a top-priority of German Foreign Policy.

Nuclear arsenals have been reduced dramatically over the last two decades. But there is no reason for complacency.

Therefore, Germany welcomes the proposal by the United States to start a new round of disarmament talks with the Russian Federation. This is an opportunity which should not be missed!

In our view, new talks should also include strategic and substrategic, deployed and non-deployed nuclear weapons.

Besides, the Nuclear Weapon States have issued negative security assurances to all States in compliance with their obligations under the Non-Proliferation Treaty. The role of nuclear weapons has been reduced in many security doctrines, e.g. in NATO’s. These are all contributions on which we can build in our efforts to achieve our joint goal – a world without nuclear weapons.

The risk of terrorists acquiring nuclear weapons or nuclear devices has unfortunately increased. This is one of the reasons why it is so important to equally strengthen the non-proliferation regime. Disarmament and Non-Proliferation are two sides of the same coin. Therefore, it is of crucial importance to redouble our efforts to implement the NPT-Action Plan.

In Germany’s assessment, the best path towards Global Zero is to pursue realistic, verifiable, irreversible steps. Germany calls for the immediate commencement of negotiations on a Treaty banning the production of Fissile material and the entry into force of the CTBT.

It will take sustained, high-level political will and commitment to achieving our common goal of Global Zero. Germany is fully committed.

Therefore Germany aligns itself with the well-balanced Statement on the humanitarian consequences of the use of nuclear weapons presented by Australia