



**STATEMENT BY
H.E. AMBASSADOR VOLKER HEINSBERG
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF GERMANY TO THE CONFERENCE ON
DISARMAMENT ON "NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT"**

**GENEVA, 23 JUNE 2005
(CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY)**

Foreign Minister Fischer underlined explicitly in his speech at the 7th Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, that the aim of German policy remains a world that is free of the threat of nuclear weapons. There is general agreement on the final goal of the process of nuclear disarmament, i.e. the total elimination of nuclear weapons. This goal was formulated in the Final Document of SSOD-I in 1978 and was made explicit again in the "Principles and Objectives for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament" adopted by the 1995 NPT-Review and Extension Conference and in the Final Document of the 2000 NPT Review Conference, in which the nuclear weapon states subsequently declared their "unequivocal undertaking to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals" as part of the 13 practical steps to implement Article VI of the NPT.

These decisions did not occur in a vacuum. It is the end of the Cold War, the end of the East-West confrontation, which has brought with it these new opportunities for practical and concrete measures in the field of nuclear disarmament reflected in the commitments of these documents. At the same time, the international security situation has become in many ways even more complex. Especially at a regional level, the conflict potential has increased. The threats posed by the continuing proliferation of WMD and their means of delivery have become more pronounced. Developments during the last years have given rise to mounting concerns regarding continuing proliferation and non-compliance with the non-proliferation obligations of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. The possible risk of nuclear weapons programmes being pursued under the cover of civilian nuclear programmes are matters of particular concern.

The NPT remains the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime and the essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament. Both are fundamentally important, both are priorities and none of them should be dealt with at the expense of the other. The NPT is the most universal multilateral treaty. It is of paramount importance to maintain its authority and its integrity in all its aspects. Furthermore, pursuing universal adherence to the Treaty stands for strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation regime and thus contributing to enhanced regional and international security and stability.

We observe growing frustration regarding the slow progress in the field of nuclear disarmament. Germany regrets that the 2005 NPT Review Conference has contributed to that frustration instead of giving new impetus to the process of nuclear disarmament.

The complete elimination of nuclear weapons can only be achieved by an incremental approach with the 13 practical steps for the systematic and progressive implementation of Art. VI adopted by the 2000 NPT Review Conference as the performed benchmark for the disarmament process. Continued tangible progress towards irreversible and verifiable nuclear disarmament is indispensable.

First and foremost, we have to start negotiations in the CD on a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty. In this context, I recall para 36 of the Common Position of the EU relating to the 2005 NPT RevCon which “appeals again to the Disarmament Conference for the immediate commencement and early conclusion of a non-discriminatory, universally applicable Treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, without pre-conditions, and bearing in mind the special coordinator’s report and the mandate included therein”. An FMCT would constitute a new substantial nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation measure, a proof for effective multilateralism and an essential building block of our international security system.

As part of the overall nuclear disarmament process, also non-strategic nuclear weapons must be reduced in a verifiable and irreversible manner on all sides. In Germany, there is a serious public debate on this issue which calls for practical steps. The EU Common Position on the 2005 NPT RevCon also highlights this aim. In it, the EU takes up a step-by-step approach that was advocated in a working paper that Germany presented to the 1st PrepCom of the 7th NPT RevCon. An incremental approach is needed with first rather modest confidence building measures as e.g. the reaffirmation of the 1991/92 presidential nuclear initiatives by the United States of America and the Russian Federation as well as a voluntary exchange of information by all nuclear-weapon States on existing holdings of non-strategic nuclear weapons taking into account the protection of confidential information.

Furthermore, the entry into force of the Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty at the earliest possible date is of key importance for any progress in this field. That’s why Germany calls upon all States that have not yet signed and ratified the Treaty and in particular those whose ratification is required for an early entry into force to do so without delay and without conditions.

Germany fully supports the establishment of an appropriate subsidiary body in the CD to deal with nuclear disarmament as called for in the Final Document of the 2000 NPT RevCon.

The Final Document of the 2000 NPT RevCon also agreed “that legally binding security assurances by the five nuclear-weapon states to the non-nuclear-weapon States Parties to the NPT strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation regime” and furthermore noted “the establishment in March 1998 by the CD of the Ad Hoc Committee on effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use, or threat of use of nuclear weapons”. Therefore and in line with para. 38 of the EU Common Position, Germany also supports the establishment of a CD Ad Hoc Committee as provided for in para. 1 of the revised A5 proposal (CD/1693/rev.1).

Overcoming the stalemate of the CD would give a decisive impetus to the process of nuclear disarmament.