Mr Chairman,

My delegation has the honour to introduce, on behalf of the co-sponsors, draft resolution L.37 entitled “Consolidation of peace through practical disarmament measures”.

Germany first tabled its traditional biannual resolution in 1996. The resolution promotes a comprehensive and integrated approach to arms control and disarmament matters. It combines a wide variety of aspects from confidence-building measures to peace-keeping with an attempt to get tangible results within a foreseeable time-frame.

The concept of practical disarmament goes back to former Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali’s ‘Agenda for Peace’. Its basic idea was to focus on the relevance of practical measures, including cooperation projects, for the consolidation of peace in conflict and post-conflict environments. Since then, measures ranging from the control of small arms and light weapons including their ammunition, de-mining, demobilization, reintegration of former combatants have become integral parts of effective conflict resolution and post-conflict rehabilitation. Practical disarmament and arms control measures have led to results with a direct impact on the lives of people in countries affected by conflict.

Mr Chairman,

A concrete expression of the resolution’s intent is the work of the ‘Group of Interested States in Practical Disarmament Measures’. The Group of Interested States meets in New York since 1998 on a regular basis in an effort to strengthen international cooperation and to promote concrete projects of practical disarmament and arms control, especially as proposed and undertaken by affected states themselves. The Group provides for a forum to exchange views, discuss concepts and facilitates the matching of needs and resources between donor and recipient states. It is open to States, IGOs and interested NGOs.

In recent years the Group of Interested States has been focussing more strongly on project work with regard to the control of small arms and light weapons. It endeavours to promote exchange of information in best practices with regards to small arms control, including stockpile management and marking and tracing. Projects in implementation of the UN Program of Action have become its main area of work. This year’s Second Review Conference on the implementation of the Program of Action has acknowledged this by highlighting the role of the GIS.

Germany wishes to thank in particular the co-sponsors of the resolution for their support.

Mr. Chairman,
Please allow me also to point to an important issue of concern to Germany.

Germany is a strong supporter of the UN transparency instruments and promotes in particular the reporting on the UN register of conventional arms and on Military Expenditure. Germany, together with Roumania, is the author of the biannual resolution entitled "Objective information on military matters, including transparency on military expenditures". As this is and has always been a consensus resolution, we believe that this transparency instrument should be universally recognized as a substantial contribution to trust and confidence building. Unfortunately, in recent years, we have witnessed a decline in the reporting morale in general and with regard to military expenditure in particular. Therefore, the Foreign Ministers of Germany and Roumania addressed a joint letter to member States lacking in reporting to underline the importance of the reformed UN Standardized Reporting on Military Expenditure as a global transparency measure. While we understand that for reasons of time this could not yet influence this year's reporting, Germany would urge states that have failed so far to do so to report to the Secretary General on military expenditures.

Thank you, Mr Chairman.