Mr. Chairman,

On behalf of Germany, I would like to congratulate you on your assumption of the chairmanship of the First Committee. I assure you of Germany’s utmost support for your work!

Germany fully aligns itself with the statements delivered by the EU and the NPDI.

Mr. Chairman,

This committee is dedicated to issues that are of essential importance to peace and security for all of us. Therefore it is no surprise that our deliberations are intense and sometimes controversial. However, we should remind ourselves time and again of our joint goal – a safer and secure world with fewer weapons.

The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action agreed between Iran and the E3+3 in July shows that diplomatic solutions can be reached if all parties concerned demonstrate the necessary political will.

With regard to this year’s NPT Review Conference, it is our view that even though we did not agree on a final document, this should not be perceived as a shortcoming of the Treaty itself. The NPT remains the indispensable cornerstone of nuclear non-proliferation. While it is not perfect it continues to be the best basis on which to pursue nuclear disarmament. Therefore we should refrain from any action that could diminish the value of this Treaty.

Furthermore, the 2010 Action Plan remains valid and should be fully implemented.
Germany shares the assessment that more should and could be done. Given that there are still more than 16,000 nuclear weapons in the world, we need to push harder for progress. Therefore, Germany supports efforts to launch negotiations on an FMCT, preferably in the CD but we are also open for alternate fora. Furthermore, the International Partnership for nuclear disarmament verification provides us with the opportunity to advance knowledge and develop skills that will be essential for verifying multilateral nuclear disarmament.

Germany welcomes the debate on the catastrophic humanitarian impact of nuclear weapon detonations. The three conferences in Oslo, Nayarit and Vienna reminded us – as did the commemorations in Hiroshima and Nagasaki – of the many reasons why a nuclear weapon should never be used again.

At the same time, it is not realistic to expect that nuclear disarmament can advance without engaging those States possessing nuclear weapons. The debate about nuclear weapons has a humanitarian, but also clearly a security dimension, which cannot be ignored. We should use every opportunity to resume dialogue and engage constructively. This could be achieved inter alia by establishing an - inclusive - Open-Ended Working Group.

Mr. Chairman,

Germany greatly appreciates and supports the international community’s work in advancing the verified elimination of chemical weapons. The “systematic and repeated” use of chlorine as a chemical weapon in Syria, reported by the OPCW’s Fact-Finding Mission, is a clear breach of the
Convention and international law. It further aggravates the disastrous humanitarian situation of the Syrian people.

Germany thus welcomes the unanimous decision by the UN Security Council to establish a Joint Investigative Mechanism to identify those involved in the use of chemicals as weapons. Germany will do its part to ensure that the Mechanism can quickly take up its important work by providing financial contributions and expertise.

The inconsistencies in Syria’s declaration on its chemical weapons programme under the CWC are another major cause of concern and must be clarified convincingly.

Reports about the alleged use of sulphur mustard by – ISIS - in Iraq and Syria constitute a new and alarming quality. In future, we see OPCW play an important role in addressing the use of chemical weapons by non-state actors.

After a long period of standstill, the upcoming Review Conference on the Biological Weapons Convention is a chance to make the Convention a more efficient and effective instrument.

Mr. Chairman,

**Small arms and light weapons** cause tremendous human suffering and are one of the root causes of displacement and migration. Against this backdrop, it is fully justified that the topic has been high on the Security Council’s agenda this year! Germany recognises the internationally binding instruments such as the Arms Trade Treaty as a sound basis of its SALW policy. It is good news that the Sustainable
Development Goal 16.4 foresees a significant reduction of illicit small arms trafficking.

German Foreign Minister Steinmeier highlighted the importance of this issue here in New York only last week. We attach great importance to the joint G7-initiative with the African Union aiming at better SALW coordination in the Sahel. This initiative will enhance our assistance to this region heavily affected by SALW.

Let me address an emerging issue of great importance: Lethal autonomous weapons systems. Given the speed of technological progress, it is high time to take this issue seriously. There is a common understanding that machines should not be allowed to take life-and-death decisions without human intervention. Germany stands ready to shoulder further responsibilities in order to advance the discussions within the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons.

Mr. Chairman,

Finally, allow me to make a remark on Cyber: Germany firmly believes that information and communications technologies are increasingly relevant in conflicts. They have already become an important factor in international security. To agree on a set of transparency and confidence building measures and to establish mechanisms in case of a cyberattack could be the right way forward to face this danger. Germany will continue to engage actively in this field.

Thank you very much.