Mr. Chairman,

I align myself with the Cluster II Statement by the EU and the relevant NPDI positions.

50 years after signing of the Non-Proliferation Treaty is an important occasion to remind ourselves that the NPT has been a very successful treaty strengthening the principle of non-proliferation and preventing many countries from pursuing non-peaceful nuclear options. Even while we are faced with unprecedented challenges and threats to the nuclear non-proliferation regime, there can be no doubt about the overwhelmingly positive track record of the non-proliferation pillar of the NPT. There would be certainly more nuclear weapons’ states, and the world would be by far less secure, had the NPT not been negotiated and agreed in 1968.

Today, there is an urgent need to take the current challenges to the NPT seriously, first and foremost the DPRK’s illegal quest for nuclear weapons, and to respond strongly to any violations and disrespect to the nuclear non-proliferation regime. At the same time, we need to preserve and build upon the accomplishments of the NPT in enforcing and preserving the principle of non-proliferation. In addition, let me underline that a sound non-proliferation regime, building
in particular on IAEA safeguards and verification, is clearly one of the decisive preconditions for nuclear disarmament and for ultimately making progress towards a world free of nuclear weapons.

North Korea's continuous and accelerating development of its nuclear and ballistic missile programs is the most blatant threat to the nuclear non-proliferation regime enshrined in the NPT to date. DPRK has carried out six nuclear tests and has launched multiple ballistic missiles and satellites, thereby continuously violating various UN Security Council resolutions. While the recent test stop declaration is a step in the right direction, it is by far not enough! The international community expects North Korea to permanently refrain from further nuclear testing, to cease immediately all nuclear activities and launches using ballistic missile technology, ultimately to abandon its nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programs "in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner". We strongly urge DPRK to promptly return to the NPT, to adhere to its IAEA Safeguards Agreement and allow for the return of IAEA inspectors.

A robust nuclear non-proliferation system is based on the IAEA's safeguards system and its effective implementation. The IAEA must have adequate resources and political support to fulfil its safeguards mandates. One of the expectations of the last Review Cycle - which has not been fulfilled - is to have NPT members decide to strengthen the non-proliferation regime by promoting an IAEA Comprehensive Safeguards
Agreement together with an Additional Protocol as the gold standard of the international safeguards system. State parties meeting this gold standard should receive preferential treatment for the supply of nuclear fuel, equipment or technology. We call on all States who have not yet done so to sign and bring into force an Additional Protocol.

As the case of North Korea underscores, Germany also continues to see the need for arriving at a common understanding of States parties on how to respond effectively to a State party’s withdrawal from the NPT based on Art. X.

Turning to the accomplishments of the non-proliferation pillar, the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) between the E3/EU+3 and Iran has defused a nuclear proliferation crisis in the Middle East and rooted Iran firmly back on the NPT track.

The JCPOA is today a central element of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime and an important asset to regional security. Germany is committed to the preservation and the full and effective implementation of the JCPOA by all sides.

The JCPOA is not built on trust, but on strict monitoring and verification by the IAEA. Under the JCPOA Iran is subject to the strongest nuclear verification regime in the world. We reaffirm our strong support for the IAEA’s efforts to verify and monitor Iran’s compliance with its nuclear-related commitments under the JCPOA. So far, since 2013, Germany has made available 4.48 Mio. EUR for IAEA monitoring and
verification in Iran, and we will continue supporting the IAEA in this regard. We call on all States to provide the IAEA with the necessary resources for its monitoring and verification work in Iran.

We call on Iran to continue implementing its JCPOA commitments, including by fully cooperating with the IAEA. In this respect, we strongly encourage Iran to proceed to an early ratification of the Additional Protocol.

Unfortunately, there is no progress to report with regard to the Syrian case of non-compliance. Germany deplores Syria's ongoing failure to comply with its nuclear safeguards obligations. Syria should fully cooperate with the IAEA by providing access to the information, documentation, sites, material and personnel in Syria that the Agency has requested.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Syria's unresolved nuclear issues in the face of ongoing armed conflict showcase the risks and challenges emanating from the proliferation of WMD, escalating regional conflicts and the threat of nuclear terrorism. We must be aware of these challenges to maintain a sufficient level of nuclear security.

The Nuclear Security Summit process has drawn global attention to these challenges. Germany contributed to the process in the field of improving security of radioactive sources and the protection from cyber attacks against nuclear facilities. Much work still needs to be done. We welcome the
IAEA’s readiness to fulfill its central role with respect to nuclear security and hope that the momentum can be maintained also in the NPT context.

Thank you!