



Permanent Mission
of the Federal Republic of Germany
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Mr. President,

First of all, I would like to thank you, Mr. President, the chairs of the main committees and subsidiary bodies and their teams as well as the secretariat for your tireless efforts.

We came here to defend the rules-based international order and to show that the NPT is not just a piece of paper, as my Minister, German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock put it when she spoke here four weeks ago. She thereby underlined the political relevance of the NPT as an important contribution to international stability and security. The last months and weeks have demonstrated that this task is more important and at the same time more difficult than ever.

Throughout this year and time and again during this Review Conference, we were reminded that the challenges we face are not abstract but, as in the case of Ukraine's nuclear facilities, real and urgent.

In the end, we have to acknowledge that we cannot successfully assess the status of the NPT's implementation when we shy away from a diagnosis of what is actually hampering its implementation.

When Russia is waging a war against Ukraine in breach of the UN charter and in contravention of the security assurances it gave in the

Budapest Memorandum, when Russia is purposefully endangering the Ukrainian Nuclear facilities –this has immediate repercussions on the NPT. Unfortunately, this Review Conference was not able to agree on language which would have adequately reflected this situation and urged Russia to immediately hand back control of the Zaporozhzhya Nuclear Power plant to its rightful sovereign owner, Ukraine.

Unfortunately in this Review Conference, States parties, including some nuclear weapon states, were not always as united as they needed to be in tackling even the most serious violations of the NPT, like North Korea's nuclear weapons and delivery systems programmes or other regional proliferation crises.

We came to this conference with a lot of realism, but also with the ambition to stretch what is possible. My Minister had voiced the hope to be able to move “just an inch”. Together with partners in the Stockholm Initiative and the NPTDI we have worked very hard to identify elements that could serve as a basis for consensus.

Although we could not advance on those ideas here, we will continue to try to advance them: Progress on risk reduction can be a catalyst for nuclear disarmament; the same is true for advances in nuclear disarmament verification. We also appreciate that we have been able to shift the focus to topics that had been given less consideration in the past, like youth and gender perspectives or victims assistance and environmental remediation – although we acknowledge that this is by large not enough yet.

The review conference has also demonstrated how important it is to give equal weight to the views of countries of the North and the South and the

three pillars in the NPT community. We were content that in this regard this conference made progress on **strengthening the third pillar**, including by highlighting the significant contribution of nuclear applications in the field of health, food security and others to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Whatever shortcomings and problems of the NPT this meeting has brought to daylight, there is no alternative but to work together. The next review cycle will provide important opportunities in this regard. We are encouraged that Russia and the United States, the states with the largest arsenals are committed to the full implementation of the New START Treaty and to pursuing a follow-up agreement to the New START treaty as a substantial contribution to nuclear disarmament. Over the next years, we also need to improve transparency of nuclear weapons programmes in a way that builds confidence among nuclear weapon states, especially in the face of rising arsenals.

Let me close by saying that the NPT's role as the cornerstone of our international nonproliferation and disarmament architecture is not challenged by the failure of this Review Conference to adopt a consensus outcome. Its legal status is not affected, nor the radiance of the nuclear non-proliferation norm or the practical relevance of the safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency as a fundamental component of the nuclear non-proliferation regime. But the goals and ambitions that we had hoped to realize here continue to be on the table and urge us to approach the upcoming next review cycle with even greater effort.

Thank you, Mr. President!