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Principles and priorities of German defence policy

The principles and priorities of German defence policy take into consideration the following factors:

– **The transformation of security policy interests – Germany's new role in the framework of multinational involvement and partnerships;**
– **The integration of German military policy into German security and defence policy;**
– **The importance of confidence-building and arms control.**

Mr. Chairman,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Many thanks for your invitation and for allowing me to speak at the Vienna Hofburg, a solemn place, rich in history, and one that has such special significance for both Austrian and German history. In particular, I thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak to you today on the topic "Principles and priorities of German security policy", with an emphasis on confidence-building and arms control. This is because arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation are important elements of German security policy, which is aimed at conflict prevention. I should like to spend the next few minutes going over this policy in detail.

To begin with, let me make the following point: if we look at the overall situation with regard to security policy in the twenty-first century, we see that we are confronted by different risks and challenges today than at the time of the Cold War. This is certainly not a new realization, but it is surely one that we share and that unites us.

This altered environment for security policy is also having its effects on Germany. Today, 20 years after reunification, Germany is facing stronger demands than in the past to assume global responsibility and to confront new risks and challenges.

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Assuming responsibility does not, however, automatically mean becoming militarily involved. Which instruments and means we employ in connection with the transformation of our foreign and security policy interests must be very carefully examined and weighed.

Our mandate, rooted in the Basic Law, to defend Germany and its allies and to protect Germany's citizens against attacks, external dangers and political blackmail, remains unchanged. This includes the capacity to contribute to the prevention of conflicts and crises worldwide and to their common management and follow-up. The *Bundeswehr* (German armed forces) is taking on a central role and importance in that regard.

But armed forces alone cannot create peace, and cannot guarantee lasting security on their own. Military deployment can only create time for diplomatic solutions and provide security as a framework or prerequisite for the rebuilding of civil institutions.

What we need, therefore, is a modern, forward-looking, cross-disciplinary security policy that is nationally and internationally networked in both the civilian and military spheres. In this respect, the OSCE is and will remain, for Germany, the most comprehensive pan-European security organization, in which all States, but also and especially the United States of America, Canada and the Russian Federation, are represented on an equal basis.

And it is precisely for this reason that the OSCE is playing a central role as a forum for consultation, co-operation and negotiation. It is an essential component of international crisis prevention.

Our common goal must be to counter perils to our security at their point of origin or at their inception. Threats must be managed at a distance, by civilian as well as military means, if necessary.

I should now like to address the environment for security policy in the twenty-first century from the German point of view.

Against the backdrop of increasing globalization and interdependence, German security is now inseparably bound up with developments in Europe and the world at large. Germany today no longer feels threatened by the regular armed forces of any country; rather, we see ourselves confronted by new risks and dangers.

First and foremost is international terrorism, which aims at the destruction of our community and our values. In addition, the spread of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems represents a huge threat. This leads to regional and global instability and forces us to take precautions in order to protect ourselves.

Our society is also confronted by organized crime to the point of suffering Internet-based attacks. At the same time, the vulnerability of our infrastructure and our societies has increased along with globalization. Interdependence has also grown as a result of international trade, investment, travel, communications and knowledge. Disturbances or disruptions in the global network would have serious consequences for the economy, the well-being and the social stability of our societies.

In addition, the rule of law, democracy and good governance are lacking in many countries. In some cases, this has led to the complete breakdown and collapse of States.

This situation is exacerbated by religious extremism, climate change, water shortages, dependence on fossil fuels, migration, poverty and various pandemics, to mention only a few "buzzwords".

Ladies and gentlemen,

It follows from what has been said that, in an age of globalization, it is hardly possible any more to draw clear dividing lines between external and internal security. The two are inextricably linked. That is precisely why these problems require cross-disciplinary approaches at the national level and, to the extent possible, at the multilateral level as well.

Dealing with international security – that is, its analysis and evaluation and the conclusions and recommendations for action deriving therefrom – therefore requires a comprehensive approach. To consider it from a purely military standpoint would fall short of what is needed and be doomed to failure.

The concepts of security and security policy must take into account the manifold causes of crises and conflicts. No State can guarantee peace, security, welfare and prosperity on its own. Integration and co-operation with partners and allies, and collaboration in international organizations, are more than ever essential for a responsible approach to security.

German foreign and security policy is, therefore, essentially preventive and comprehensive, that is, it is designed to be cross-disciplinary and multilateral. It is based on the international rule of law and promotes non-violent methods of resolution in order to prevent situations from arising in which military intervention would be unavoidable.

Collaboration with the United Nations, the OSCE, NATO and the European Union (EU) is, in the German view, an essential requirement for being able to ensure lasting security in the twenty-first century. No single organization has at its disposal the necessary competencies and strengths to be able to achieve this. Only through collaboration can these organizations achieve their full effectiveness.

It is our task to foster developments – which we can already glimpse on the horizon – if we wish to have further influence and occupy an appropriate place in this new structure of international relations.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I should like to turn next to the German concept of "networked security as the determining characteristic of Germany's security and crisis response policy".

In the 2006 "White paper on Germany's security policy and the future of the *Bundeswehr*", we drew three basic conclusions:

–   First: the threats to our security, including the threats to human rights, must be countered preventively;

– Second: a comprehensive, networked approach is required, one that includes important political, diplomatic, economic and development measures as well as military means;

– Third: measures to avert crises must increasingly take place within multinational alliances.

These three conclusions form the crux of our concept of networked security. "Networked security" means that the goals, processes, structures, means and capabilities of the relevant actors are co-ordinated more effectively and consistently approached from a cross-disciplinary perspective.

Networked security is based on an international and supranational concept and applies equally to State and non-State actors. For this reason, the networking of government departments in the area of crisis prevention is an absolute prerequisite for long-term success, in keeping with the slogan "The best crisis is one that never happens".

In Germany, the groundwork for this cross-disciplinary, common approach was laid as early as May 2004 with an interdepartmental co-ordination plan regarding "Civilian crisis prevention, conflict resolution and peace consolidation". In implementing this agreement, the German Government expressed its determination to make its contributions to peace, security and development more effective and longer-lasting, especially in countries in transition and developing countries, by gradually strengthening their preventive focus.

Promotion of the rule of law, human rights, democracy and security, reform of the security sector, and promotion of civil society's peacemaking potential, resulting in the improvement and safeguarding of life chances, are the strategic starting-points for this type of crisis prevention.

A coherent strategy of crisis prevention and conflict management also requires a stronger involvement of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civil society. Non-State actors must be afforded the opportunity to participate actively in the work of State actors.

Moreover, close collaboration among various governmental, economic and social actors within a multinational framework also prevents excessive demands being placed on individual States or organizations.

However, the elimination of factors and structures which impede the development process in a region in crisis cannot and must not take place solely from outside. Social and political forces which provide long-term support for these processes must arise in crisis regions themselves.

The respective societies of the partner countries must take ownership of the necessary reform and development processes. Structural crisis prevention must also be co-operative, because it is dependent upon the willingness of the parties directly involved to make peace.

Therefore, the development and promotion in crisis regions of democratic State structures that are capable of taking action to prevent conflicts and of establishing contact

points for a broad spectrum of crisis prevention measures are the starting-points for structural crisis prevention.

The further development of international law, the codification of conflict resolution measures, the recognition of human rights policy as preventive peacemaking, and the more targeted use of civilian sanctions are also part of the overall strategy required.

I should like to stress that, by improving the economic, social, environmental and political conditions in countries benefiting from co-operation, development policy also contributes to the prevention and elimination of structural causes of violence.

With regard to Germany's new role in the framework of multinational involvement and partnerships, it is very important to point out that Germany is ready to assume more global responsibility. Our multifaceted engagement in recent years has demonstrated this. Global problems require global and, above all, shared responses. National approaches all too often enhance security only temporarily; in the long run, however, they may even lead to a loss of security, or at least not to the desired sustainability.

This need for a common approach to foreign and security policy was certainly also one of the reasons why the EU countries in recent years have increasingly warmed to the notion of a common foreign and security policy and have already incorporated it, at least partially, into the European security and defence policy.

The EU seems predestined to meet the current and future challenges of security policy effectively through a comprehensive civil-military approach. Its concept of security policy goes a long way towards accommodating German views. For this reason, Germany considers the European security strategy as the cornerstone of European security for the years ahead.

A central element in the formulation of the European security and defence policy from the beginning was the development of civilian and military capabilities in the area of crisis management and conflict prevention. The so-called Headline Goal process is a central building block of the EU Capability Development Mechanism.

The EU's integrated civil-military approach can also be seen in the fact that success has been achieved in synchronizing the military and civilian goals to the extent possible, so that a first step has been taken towards a comprehensive civilian-military planning capability.

In addition, the creation of a civilian planning and leadership capability under the leadership of a director in charge of all missions has significantly improved European civilian capabilities. With the establishment of a directorate for civilian-military strategic planning, the EU has taken a further step towards the practical implementation of the "networked approach" and is thus a forerunner in this field.

Germany will continue to actively support this new path that the EU has taken.

In the process, however, the EU should under no circumstances enter into competition with NATO. In the German view, NATO will in the future remain the anchor of stability and the guarantor of the collective defence of the Western community of values.

A strong EU should actually strengthen the Atlantic Alliance, which is also undergoing a process of political and military transformation.

From the German point of view, far more attention needs to be paid to the strategic co-operation with the EU. Above all, however, greater importance must be given to the strategic dialogue within the Alliance and to the political consultation and decision-making process among the Allies on all questions relevant to security policy. This must happen as soon as possible if the Alliance is to remain the primary guarantor of security for the Western community of States.

Germany is in favour of a cautious expansion of NATO from the functional as well as the geographical standpoint. In terms of networked security, NATO is only one of many actors involved in the international response to crises.

The most recent NATO summit, held in Strasbourg and Kehl in April 2009, provided crucial guidelines for this expansion. These include, on the one hand, the adoption by the Heads of State or Government of the Declaration on Alliance Security and, on the other hand, the decision to develop a new Strategic Concept 2010.

Let us turn now to the importance of military policy in the framework of German security and defence policy.

Germany has recognized that the deployment of military forces may be necessary in order to nip crises in the bud so that they do not develop into conflicts. With the far-reaching military and military-political instruments at its disposal, military force can not only contain or forcefully put a stop to the causes of violence, but can also help to eliminate them or prevent them from emerging.

Therefore, an effective *Bundeswehr* is essential for Germany as an instrument of a comprehensive and forward-looking security and defence policy. It must be able to carry out duties and orders for the preservation and consolidation of peace, security and stability on the basis of an expanded, networked concept of security, against the backdrop of twenty-first century challenges.

Moreover, without the military capabilities of the *Bundeswehr*, we would not be able to live up to our international obligations.

Thus, in the context of the security policy challenges of the twenty-first century, the military has lost none of its importance. The importance of the military has merely shifted. In the context of worldwide security policy challenges, military means are no longer to be considered as primary, but rather as complementary, if we wish to guarantee security in the national as well as the international framework.

This gives the military, with its special capabilities, an important but not an exclusive role. Military means are to be deployed only where civilian means are unsuitable or unsuccessful.

In this context, military capabilities are by no means to be employed exclusively as a last resort, when all other governmental instruments have failed to attain the desired result; rather, they can make a valuable contribution in the framework of crisis prevention.

According to the German concept, the armed forces remain a last resort in the framework of a necessary use of force.

Thus, the deployment of EU troops to the Democratic Republic of the Congo in 2006, or their participation in the maritime mission off the coast of Lebanon led by the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, was simply the deployment of military means in crisis prevention.

I am speaking expressly here of "military means" in crisis prevention, in order to draw attention to a special case.

In the policy concept – whether in the framework of networked security or of a comprehensive approach – military means must also represent an equally viable instrument, alongside the other means available, in order to effectively counter risks and challenges to our security.

But since the challenges to security are constantly changing, the only effective way to counter them is through adaptable and flexible structures. Transformation is the means by which this adaptation process takes place.

The overarching goal of transformation is to increase the deployment capability of the *Bundeswehr* and preserve it in the long run.

At this point, I might quote the Inspector General of the *Bundeswehr*, General Schneiderhan: "The transformation of the *Bundeswehr* is (…) a response to the changes in the classic perception of warfare and is, consequently, an endeavour to adequately adapt to and prepare for changed conflict scenarios and new threats".

The outcome of this is that concept development and experimental testing must be systematically implemented and constantly adapted so that the armed forces are at all times adapted to the actual reality and appropriate to the possible threat scenarios and, above all, able to respond to these scenarios with means that are likely to achieve the desired result. This also includes military training that is adapted to the changing and different scenarios.

Let me say a few words about the deployment of the *Bundeswehr*. In our understanding, armed forces should only be deployed if the political assessment and decision by the federal government and Parliament is that their deployment is absolutely necessary and unavoidable. Their deployment is to be limited and legitimized by international law and should also pursue a clearly defined goal. Wherever possible, it is to take place in a multinational environment.

From the very beginning, military capabilities should be taken into account at a strategic level – both national and multinational – in an integrated policy planning process. At an operational and tactical level, there should be at least a good measure of co-ordination with the other civilian capabilities and actors.

Since the early 1990s, the *Bundeswehr* has found itself operating abroad ever more frequently. The scope of the deployed contingents grew constantly and the missions and tasks became ever more comprehensive. The *Bundeswehr* is currently represented abroad by around 7,700 servicemen and women.

A look at the most recent developments shows that both the scope and the geographical coverage of the deployments may increase further in the future.

Contributions by the *Bundeswehr* as part of a networked national security effort are diverse; they range from deployment of the *Bundeswehr* to provide military protection for civilian components in crisis areas to military assistance in training and equipment, guidance in the transformation of the security sector in crisis countries and active support for NATO and EU accession countries as well as peacebuilding and peacekeeping operations.

The actual scope of Germany's commitment in crisis and conflict areas depends on many factors. German involvement to date in international operations abroad varies considerably in terms of nature and scope. This involvement ranges from a comprehensive mission as in the case of Afghanistan – here supporting the Afghan Government in establishing and safeguarding internal security so long as the local forces are not completely able to do so as well as participating in the country's reconstruction – to limited mandates in terms of content and duration, as in the case of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Specifically with regard to Afghanistan, it is clear that Germany is pursuing a broad and cross-disciplinary approach there in terms of networked security. Reconstruction, development and security are all interdependent. This means that broad international support – both civil and military – must be maintained. The Provincial Reconstruction Teams or PRTs for short therefore continue to form the core element of our involvement in Afghanistan. It is precisely this approach with the PRTs that shows that in the course of a conflict the balance between military and civilian crisis management shifts. Thus, operations by civilian forces acquire ever greater importance during the peace consolidation phase. NGOs also appear more frequently as actors.

In order to facilitate a rapid reconstruction of civil society, conditions and structures must be created to enable a quicker transition from a military stabilization operation to a civilian peace mission.

Networked security is – as I have already stressed several times – the way forward in Germany's security policy considerations and plans. And especially the OSCE – with its tools and key tasks in the construction and expansion of democratic structures operating under the rule of law, in the protection of human and minority rights, in the promotion of civil society development and also in the area of conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation – can be singled out as a positive example of this kind of networked security approach.

Military means are, however, also of particular importance in securing the protection of population and territory because if they are properly modernized and structured they can deter potential opponents and thus help to reduce the prospect of conflict.

For this reason, Germany will continue in the future to maintain in a state of readiness armed forces that can satisfy these requirements and that possess deterrent and intervention capabilities. In this connection, we remain thoroughly committed to the nuclear deterrent and nuclear sharing.

The desired increase in one's own security must not, however, be at the expense of third countries. In Germany's view, the involvement of partners, transparency and confidence-building in military plans and projects remain absolutely essential in a responsible and forward-looking security policy.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Allow me to take this opportunity today to set out in detail the principles of our disarmament and arms control policy.

Common security through arms control and disarmament was and is the central element of the policy of peace and détente pursued by all federal governments since the Federal Republic of Germany came into existence.

The concept of comprehensive co-operative security is indispensible since its aim is to ensure a broad-based balance of interests of all States in Europe. Arms control, disarmament and confidence-building are the key to an integrated security policy in the Euro-Atlantic area and the OSCE is of prominent importance here. I say this quite consciously against the background of the frequently voiced criticism of the effectiveness of conventional arms control. The challenges that we are facing today and that we shall have to deal with in the future are diverse. At the same time, they are increasingly of a non-military nature as well. If they are to be contained and controlled, we need a comprehensive set of tools consisting of State and non-State instruments.

In the future, we shall also have to deal with military risks that may threaten our very existence. The attempt to limit armaments and to prevent an arms build-up is therefore part of a responsible and preventive security policy in the same way as efforts to remove the causes of tension.

There is a broad consensus to the effect that the European arms control architecture must be maintained and, where necessary, adapted to the changing framework conditions. The most important elements of this architecture are the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE Treaty), the Vienna Document and the Treaty on Open Skies. The CFE Treaty in particular has suffered considerable damage in recent years.

Our task now is to strengthen these arms control instruments in such a way that they can fulfil their original objectives and in addition play an appropriate role in overcoming regional and subregional crises – naturally, without having to bear the entire burden of conflict resolution.

The contribution of these instruments to crisis prevention and crisis management must continue to be guided by the principle of the indivisibility of security in the Euro-Atlantic area and other key norms such as the Helsinki principles. It is therefore with concern that we observe the trends within the European arms control architecture, particularly with respect to the CFE Treaty. We continue to regard that Treaty as an essential cornerstone of European security.

The loss of the CFE Treaty regime could lead to an erosion of the entire system of conventional arms control in Europe. Our priority therefore remains the countering of any erosion of the CFE Treaty framework in order to have a solid basis to build on as we further

develop conventional arms control in Europe in accordance with contemporary conditions. This requires collective efforts in which we should concentrate on the areas of common ground that became clear in Berlin during the CFE conference in June of this year. One such area is the understanding that, especially under the influence of protracted regional conflicts in Europe, conventional arms control on the continent continues to have an important role to play for stability and security, a role that should be preserved and expanded.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Scarcely three months after assuming office, President Obama of the United States and his new administration announced a change of course in the country's nuclear policy, something that we all wholeheartedly support.

Nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation are becoming priority concerns of American security policy and thus of our common security policy. Our common goal is – as President Obama summed it up impressively in his Prague speech – "to seek the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons".

The substantial progress expected from the START negotiations towards the implementation of the commitment regarding total nuclear disarmament, as set out in the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, will, it is hoped, soon refocus attention on conventional arms control, including from a strategic point of view.

In our efforts to repair the pillar of stability of conventional arms control and enable it to reliably support the load it is designed to bear, we must not forget that conflict scenarios are changing radically as a result of technological developments as well as new aspects of the command and deployment of armed forces. Consequently, the evaluation of the capabilities of armed forces is shifting away from purely quantitative factors towards a more qualitative assessment.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Allow me, especially as I am addressing the Forum for Security Co-operation, to go into the Vienna Document 1999 in somewhat greater detail.

The agreement that entered into force on 1 January 2000 is – as you are all aware – a confidence-building instrument to promote the transparency and predictability of military activities. The focus is on inspections, evaluation visits, the demonstration of new major weapon systems and the notification and observation of certain significant military activities and exercises. These components now constitute a tried and tested network of confidence-and security-building measures (CSBMs) and one that is well established in most OSCE States. This does not, however, mean that we should be satisfied with the current state of affairs. More than ever we must be aware of the role and significance of the Vienna Document 1999 for security and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area, not least because of the developments both within and outside the OSCE.

These tried and tested measures are important; they must not therefore simply become routine. They must be adapted to the changing conditions so that they can continue to fulfil their purpose.

The Vienna Document 1999 is rightly regarded as a central element of the Euro-Atlantic security architecture, which is characterized by co-operation, military predictability through restraint, transparency, confidence-building and verification. A culture of conflict avoidance and conflict prevention has developed out of this system of co-operative security structures, a culture that is to be preserved and refined at all costs.

The fact that since the first Vienna Document of 1990 there have been three new documents in the 1990s (in 1992, 1994 and 1999) impressively shows how flexibly one can respond to the changing conditions in Europe with this instrument consisting of CSBMs if there is the necessary political will to do so. We should use this as a model for our work in the future.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Unfortunately, one often has the impression that arms control, verification and confidence-building measures are increasingly perceived in day-to-day politics as a restriction on freedom of action in the political sphere. Exactly the opposite is true. It is precisely because we operate in this given "network" that in other areas we have the freedom we need to be able to attend to other pressing problems. We have to look after this important instrument, for otherwise we risk losing our ability to ensure lasting security in the Euro-Atlantic area. The shaping of a common OSCE security area would be endangered because the OSCE would suffer damage to an essential component of its concept of itself, namely the prevention of conflicts and the creation of reliable stability.

Hence, the OSCE would no longer be able to lay claim to its role model function in creating and ensuring security through co-operative CSBMs. This would be particularly disastrous given the clear shortcomings in the area of disarmament and arms control in other regions of the world and also in view of the great interest shown by East Asia or the countries of South America in the Euro-Atlantic security architecture.

In conclusion, let me briefly sum things up. Security and what we associate with this concept has changed dramatically. We find ourselves in a time of radical change as regards the perceptions of security, the definition of what security means to us overall, finding answers to challenges and the deployment of the instruments available to our country.

I have shown you that in the twenty-first century we face new security policy challenges and that since the end of the Cold War and reunification Germany has assumed more responsibility in the international security policy sphere.

In the twenty-first century we are dealing with a multifaceted and many-layered challenge to our security, a challenge that must be dealt with in a preventive, comprehensive and multilateral manner. Security policy must be seen as a task for the whole country. The strategic networking of different areas of action will in the future be the key prerequisite for successful crisis and conflict management. Only if all the instruments involved in internal and external security are networked can there be optimized protection against the threats of the twenty-first century.

Intensive cross-disciplinary collaboration, extensive co-operation and co-ordination on the part of all the actors involved in internal and external security, with emphasis on superior knowledge and decision-making capability, as well as the involvement of non-State

actors, are essential if we are to be able to deal with the new challenges effectively. More than anything else this requires political will. This political will must be present at all levels and promoted.

As I come to a close, let me stress one point once more. Unilateral measures by individual countries no longer meet the security policy challenges of the future.

Germany's foreign and security policy is based on a multilateral approach. We are involved in a complex system of institutions, organizations and partnerships. This increases our overall security. Networking and multilateralism go hand in hand in resolving the complex global issues of the twenty-first century. The OSCE plays a decisive role in this network given that, structurally, with its multidimensional approach, it already takes the principle of networked security into account.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation remain important elements of the German security policy, geared as it is towards conflict prevention. Germany is committed to further developing confidence-and security-building measures within the framework of the Vienna Document, to an expansion of the areas of application of the Treaty on Open Skies and to promotion of regional arms control and confidence-building. German foreign and security policy is and was under all federal governments always primarily a policy of peace. The *Bundestag* (federal parliamentary) elections held two weeks ago will not change this.

Thank you for your attention.