

**Speech by Ambassador Lucas at the
NATO Outreach Event on WMD Non-Proliferation and WMD Threats
NATO Headquarters, 22 September 2015**

**Dear Ambassador Ducaru,
Ladies and gentlemen,**

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to address you at this important outreach event. The proliferation of WMD, and the threats emanating from WMD, are extremely significant issues – although they may be a bit neglected in the overall debate. Discussions on key threats to our security nowadays focus on terrorism, fundamentalism, failing states, climate change, uncontrolled migration, and related topics.

However, the dangers emanating from the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction and from chemical, biological and radiological threats as a whole cannot be overestimated. These weapons are an enormous threat to peace and security in the hands of irresponsible state and, increasingly, non-state actors. Meeting these challenges is a priority for my country – at national level, but also in the context of NATO, the EU, the UN, and various other organizations. Drawing on my country's many activities in this field, let me briefly give some examples:

Iran

The E3+3 negotiations are a particularly impressive example of a multilateral effort aimed at preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons. In my capacity as chief negotiator for Germany for four years within the E3+3 group, I witnessed on 14 July in Vienna a truly historic agreement. After more than 12 years of negotiations, we reached a comprehensive deal which verifiably ensures that Iran's nuclear activities will serve exclusively peaceful purposes. All possible pathways to a nuclear weapon are essentially blocked. The Agreement marks a rare success of diplomacy in the Middle East, and I am convinced it will contribute to security in the region.

On 14 July 2015, the E3+3 countries and Iran agreed on the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action to resolve the dispute over Iran's nuclear programme. The agreement includes severe technical restrictions, coupled with unprecedented transparency – it builds on verifiable limitations, and not on trust. In fact, it marks the beginning of a multi-year, confidence-building process. In return, the sanctions that have been imposed on Iran since 2006 will be gradually lifted.

The breakthrough for the Vienna agreement came about after two years of intensified negotiations. Important steps were the Geneva Joint Plan of Action of November 2013, which gave us time and leeway to negotiate a comprehensive deal. The Lausanne Understanding of April 2015 set important technical parameters, around which the subsequent Vienna Agreement was spelt out. As of 28 June, the foreign ministers of the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Russia, China, and Germany, as well as the EU and Iran, convened in Vienna to bring the negotiations to an end.

The key elements of the agreement are:

- During the next 15 years, Iran will restrict its uranium enrichment to 3.67 per cent and enrich uranium only in the Natanz facility. The country's low-enriched uranium stockpile will be limited to 300 kilogrammes during this period.
- More than two thirds of Iran's centrifuges will be mothballed and placed under the supervision of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Ninety-five per cent of Iran's enriched uranium stockpile will be removed from the country or destroyed, and stocks will be severely restricted for 15 years.
- Iran will redesign and rebuild the Arak heavy-water reactor so that it cannot be used to produce weapons-grade plutonium.
- Everything that has been agreed will be closely monitored. Agreement was also reached on a unique and long-term set of transparency measures. Some of these have a duration of 20 years (e.g. centrifuge component manufacturing) or 25 years (e.g. Yellowcake).

The "snap-back" mechanism

In return for Iran's implementation of the technical restrictions placed on its nuclear programme, the current sanctions against the country will be lifted in several stages. The United Nations' "snap-back" mechanism is an important component of the agreement. This is a process through which United Nations sanctions that have been lifted can be swiftly re-imposed should Tehran substantially breach the agreement. To this end, Resolution 2231 includes a procedure that does not require the adoption of a Security Council resolution should Iran fail to adhere to the agreement.

Now, the essential task is implementation. If implemented, the agreement will certainly have a positive impact on nuclear non-proliferation, both in the region and globally.

One final word on the nuclear issue: the Iran deal must not prevent us from continuing to work on countering nuclear proliferation and working for further steps in the field of disarmament. The Alliance rightfully stressed both goals in its Deterrence and Defence Posture Review at the Chicago Summit in 2012.

Destruction of Syrian chemical weapons

This is a second success story for preventing the proliferation of WMD. You are all aware of the background. In August 2013, chemical weapons (sarin) were used against Syrian civilians. Following an agreement between the United States and Russia on the elimination of Syria's chemical weapons arsenal, the Syrian regime declared itself ready to destroy its chemical weapons and acceded to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) on 14 September 2013.

Subsequently, the chemical weapons declared by Syria were removed from the country by sea and destroyed in international waters in the eastern Mediterranean, on board the specially-equipped US vessel Cape Ray. Several countries, including Germany, were involved in the final destruction of the remnants produced by hydrolysis. In early September 2014, Germany thus received approximately 370 tonnes of remnants from the Cape Ray, took them to

Munster in Lower Saxony, where the publicly-owned disposal company GEKA incinerated the final remnants in an environmentally safe process on 30 April 2015.

In many respects, this case of the destruction of Syrian chemical weapons is unique and possibly even encouraging. Yet continuing to support the OPCW and the implementation of the CWC remains key to preventing the proliferation of chemical weapons. It is of utmost importance that all remaining chemical weapons be destroyed, also in Syria.

CBRN (Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear) defence

Lastly, let me turn to the field of CBRN defence, with some remarks on internal and external aspects of a resolute WMD non-proliferation and CBRN defence policy. Germany takes the issue of CBRN defence very seriously, not least due to the threat that Germany faced from Weapons of Mass Destruction during the Cold War.

Our continued commitment to CBRN defence is one reason why Germany is currently taking on the responsibility of European Co-Chair of the Committee on Proliferation in defence format, the responsible body here at NATO HQ.

To this very day, German troops are trained in accordance with the highest standards to survive and protect against the effects of a CBRN attack. In addition, Germany maintains a specialized CBRN defence capability, which meets scientific standards in detecting, identifying and mitigating the consequences of a CBRN incident and is equipped with modern technology.

Dealing with CBRN is a challenge for NATO as a whole. In view of the risks and possible threats posed by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, NATO's deterrence and defence posture must be continuously addressed, reviewed, evaluated, optimized, coordinated and improved.

This is reflected in the current NATO Political Guidance (2015), which re-iterates that NATO will continue to ensure that the Alliance is prepared to counter CBRN threats with a balanced mix of the forces, response capabilities, and strengthened defences needed to deter, prevent, and defend against the proliferation and use of WMD and their delivery systems.

In this context, Germany places great emphasis on the Framework Nations Concept (FNC) and is currently acting as framework nation for a CBRN defence cluster. Since work began on the FNC CBRN defence cluster last year, we have experienced a tremendous amount of interest by Allies, as well as partners.

Essentially, the FNC CBRN defence cluster is focused on developing capabilities to meet the Force Planning Targets set out in the NATO Defence Planning Process and follows a bottom-up approach that is based on capability lines of development, including doctrine, organization, training, materiel, leadership and education, as well as personnel and facilities.

In addition, at the last NATO Defence Ministerial Meeting on 24 June 2015, FNC nations discussed the proposal of linking FNC cooperation to implementation of the Readiness Action Plan (RAP), with a focus on larger multinational formations involving all services, which would be available on a permanent basis, would build on strong links of cooperation, and would introduce a high degree of interoperability.

The long-term aim of FNC cooperation in the area of CBRN defence is to create synergies among European Allies, given the limited resources that most European Allies currently have available for the wide range of costly CBRN defence capabilities.

Fighting WMD proliferation is a constant challenge. It will not go away in the foreseeable future. Living up to this challenge has not become easier – as possible threats no longer emanate from states alone, but, as we are witnessing with ISIS, from non-state actors as well. That will require more, not less, efforts, as well as increased multilateral cooperation. It calls for substantial contributions from NATO – but also necessitates cooperation from key players such as Russia and China. In this respect, the E3+3 negotiations with Iran were a positive experience – in particular against the background of our substantial differences with Russia over Ukraine and other issues. They showed what we can achieve, if we work together on issues of common interest, if we show patience and perseverance, and if we stick to our principles. All this will be required in an ever more challenging security environment, if we want to successfully tackle the manifold WMD challenges.