Germany: National Representative

Confidential: for the assigned participant only. Do not share with other participants, including the other members of your delegation. Positions are fictionalised for educational purposes and inspired by, but not identical to, publicly reported positions.

The Council in this scenario. Seven member states sit at the table: Bulgaria, Slovakia, Germany, Italy, Poland, France and the United Kingdom (this is 2009; the UK is a member state). Each state has one vote, cast by its National Representative. A common position endorsing the protocol needs a **simplified qualified majority: at least five of the seven, including at least two of Germany, France, Italy and the United Kingdom** (the facilitator will state the numbers for the actual cast). The small states cannot carry a position without the big ones; the big ones cannot decide alone. If the threshold is met, the Czech Presidency signs on the Council's behalf. Member states may also conclude side agreements outside the protocol (bilateral or trilateral understandings); these should be written down and supported by the stakeholders involved, and they are published only after the scenario. The Commission does not vote during the negotiation, but it votes last, to support or sabotage the result. The Presidency chairs without voting.

Your delegation: Germany (2 members)

Germany is the EU's largest economy and Gazprom's biggest European customer by volume. About 36 % of Germany's gas comes from Russia, but Germany is well diversified: Norwegian and Dutch gas, ample storage, and the Yamal–Europe pipeline through Belarus that bypasses Ukraine entirely. The current crisis has cut German supply by only about 10 %. Germany is barely affected, and it has enormous influence over the EU's response. That is the tension you carry into the room.

Germany is also Russia's key partner in **Nord Stream**, a direct Baltic Sea pipeline from Russia to Germany that would bypass Ukraine, Poland and the Baltic states. It is in the permitting phase and deeply controversial in Eastern Europe; a former chancellor chairs its shareholders' committee.

Key facts (all members):

- Dependency ~36 %, well diversified; only ~10 % supply cut; ample storage.
- Largest buyer of Russian gas in Europe; E.ON Ruhrgas and BASF/Wintershall have billions invested in the Russian gas relationship.
- Key partner in Nord Stream; German industry has lobbied against antagonising Russia.

Decision rule: Germany's National Representative casts the state's vote in the Council. Germany is one of the four big states whose votes the qualified majority requires.

Your role

Motivations & constraints: You are Germany's senior representative and speak for the German government in the Council. Your instinct is caution and quiet diplomacy: Germany's commercial relationship with Russia is deep and valuable, and you do not want this crisis to damage it. Your aims: resolve the crisis quietly through back-channel diplomacy, not loud EU declarations or confrontation with Russia; protect Nord Stream (any EU response that questions or delays bypass pipelines is unacceptable, it is a commercial project that enhances German energy security); maintain Germany's privileged relationship with Gazprom, in which German companies have billions invested; and avoid binding solidarity commitments that would oblige Germany to share reserves or sacrifice commercial interests for countries that failed to diversify.

Red lines: No EU language criticising Nord Stream or bypass pipelines in general. No binding gas-sharing obligations: Germany invested in diversification and storage and should not subsidise countries that did not. No unnecessarily confrontational posture toward Russia (a partner, not an adversary); this is a commercial dispute, not a strategic confrontation.

Style: In plenary, express concern and support for the Presidency's efforts; "we stand in solidarity" costs nothing as long as it commits to nothing; focus on the need for a commercial resolution rather than political escalation. Bilaterally with Russia, be supportive: listen, signal that Germany is in no anti-Russian bloc, and if the pipeline strategist raises Nord Stream, be receptive but discreet. Above all, avoid isolation: if Germany is seen as the country blocking solidarity while others suffer, it is a disaster. Appear constructive without conceding substance, and remember that at the Council vote your seat is one of the big four the majority needs, which is leverage as well as exposure.

Confidential (for you alone, not for your delegation): You know that Germany's position is morally uncomfortable even if it is strategically rational: Bulgaria is facing a humanitarian crisis while Germany is inconvenienced, and Poland will accuse you of putting commercial interests ahead of European solidarity. They have a point. You will not say so publicly. You also know that Russia's pipeline strategist has been instructed to approach you about Nord Stream; you are receptive, but if Poland or the Commission see you huddling with Russia about bypass pipelines while Bulgaria freezes, it is politically toxic. Your energy adviser is more sympathetic to solidarity than you are (let them play that part, it gives Germany a more balanced image), but make sure they understand: Nord Stream is non-negotiable and binding obligations are off the table. Privately you are considering whether a soft statement of concern about energy security (vague enough to mean nothing concrete, warm enough to show empathy) could satisfy the Eastern Europeans without costing Germany anything. Your adviser might draft it.