

**Opening Remarks by Mr. KOMURA Masahiro
Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan**

**At the Side Event on FMCT
at the Second Preparatory Committee for the 2026 NPT Review Conference
(22 July 2024, in Geneva, Switzerland)**

For the first time, since the peak of the Cold War, the world is facing a possible reversal of the decreasing trend, of nuclear stockpiles.

The rapid build-up-of-arsenals, by a certain country, could cause an arms race, involving other countries.

Also, the international security environment, has become even more severe.

Thus, it is urgent, for the international community, to advance realistic and pragmatic measures, to achieve a world without nuclear weapons.

In this regard, starting a negotiation on FMCT, is an urgent task.

To maintain the declining trend, of global nuclear arsenals, it would be crucial, to limit the increase of nuclear weapons, by banning the production of fissile material, for nuclear weapons.

This will constrain, the number of nuclear weapons, at its root.

While it is, unfortunate, that the negotiations, have not started until now, there is development of substance, thanks largely to Canada.

Moreover, the NPT Review Conferences, have repeatedly emphasized, the importance and the need, of FMCT, by consensus.

Many countries have shown concrete efforts, including voluntary moratoria, on the production, of fissile materials for nuclear weapons, among others.

We need an FMCT, more than ever before.

We cannot afford inaction.

Japan, is determined to advocate and contribute, to start negotiations on FMCT.

To this end, Japan hosted a high-level event, together with the Philippines and Australia, last September, in New York.

This was to refocus political attention, on this important issue, with the participation of Prime Minister Kishida.

Also, last March, Japan took the lead, and announced the establishment of the Friends of FMCT.

This is a cross-regional group, that includes both, nuclear weapon States, and non-nuclear weapon States, whose aim is to maintain and strengthen political attention, and to expand support, for the negotiations of FMCT.

Japan will spare no effort, in this regard.

We are now, in an ideal place to discuss FMCT.

It is not only because this Committee is taking place, but also because it is the host city, of the Conference on Disarmament, and experts in this field, gather from all over the world.

Last March, Japan supported UNIDIR in organizing a hybrid event, to explore, options and opportunities to revitalize the FMCT process.

We hope today's side event, will be an occasion to share the sense of urgency, to start negotiations, and to shed light, on both the challenges and the opportunities of FMCT.

Thank you.