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PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF JAPAN  
TO THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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Mr. President,

Japan, for many decades, has been firm in its call for the total elimination of nuclear weapons. For that purpose, it requires a cumulative process of practical and concrete measures in a progressive manner. In this context, after the quality capping of nuclear weapons by banning nuclear testing through the CTBT, we believe, an FMCT, which aims at quantity capping by banning production of fissile materials for use in nuclear weapons is the next building block towards the realization of a world free of nuclear weapons.

Mr. President,

As there are many different aspects that make up an FMCT, now I would like to point out several issues often raised regarding an FMCT from Japan's perspective.

Firstly, what are the objectives and effects of an FMCT?

The most important objectives and effects are:

- (a) before anything else, to ensure non-increase of quantity of fissile materials for use in nuclear weapons;
- (b) to lay a firm legal basis for the irreversible disarmament process;
- (c) to enforce the non-proliferation efforts and enhance nuclear security as well as reduce the risk of nuclear terrorism;

(d)to reduce the discriminatory nature of the NPT regime as much as possible by obliging nuclear-weapon States to ban production of such materials in a verifiable manner; and

(e)to provide an opportunity for non-States Parties of the NPT to participate in a broader international nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime.

We are strongly convinced that these objectives and effects are widely shared.

Secondly, how should we deal with the existing stocks?

We strongly believe that a resolution for the contentious issue of stocks should not be made a pre-condition to start negotiations. A time-consuming political discussion of whether or not to include stocks would be counter-productive. Rather, in the course of future negotiations, consideration should be given to which category of stocks should be covered by the treaty. Japan recognizes that an FMCT should at least ban:

- (a)the transfer of stocks for nuclear weapons to a third country;
- (b)the diversion of stocks for civilians and conventional military use to nuclear-weapon purposes; and
- (c)the “reversion” of stocks declared as excess back to nuclear-weapon purposes.

Respectively, an FMCT has both disarmament and non-proliferation objectives. We intend to pursue these ideas in the FMCT negotiations once they begin. Furthermore, we consider that reopening the Shannon Mandate as a precondition for commencement of the negotiations is unproductive since the Shannon Mandate does not exclude the possibility to include the existing stocks in the scope of the Treaty. We should rather start negotiations based on the mandate as it stands.

Thirdly, what should be the modality of FMCT negotiations?

The CD is the most desirable for negotiations to take place since all relevant states possessing nuclear weapons are in this body.

Unfortunately, however, the CD has failed to start FMCT negotiations for many years despite the wide support for it. If the CD continues to be unsuccessful in responding to the voice of the international community, the “raison d’être” of this body as the single multilateral disarmament forum will be called further into question. From this perspective, Japan looks forward to the work by the Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on an FMCT. Japan will continue to support the GGE’s efforts in formulating a final report this Spring. We are confident that the GGE will show crucial sign posts for future negotiators. In addition, interaction with the GGE can also be considered to enrich our work in the CD.

Finally, while an FMCT remains our highest priority, we must not stop pursuing steps and effective building blocks towards nuclear disarmament, such as the reduction of non-strategic nuclear weapons in any future disarmament negotiations or process, the reduction in the role and significance of nuclear weapons, de-alerting nuclear weapons, increasing transparency of information regarding nuclear weapons, as well as multilateralization of nuclear disarmament negotiations. Also, further work on nuclear-weapon-free zones, negative security assurances, verification, as well as an early entry into force of the CTBT will surely make significant contributions to nuclear disarmament. We also place emphasis on the importance of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation education. These practical building blocks are laid out in the NPDI working paper which will be submitted to the 2015 NPT Review Conference.

Mr. President,

I assure you the continued full cooperation and support of my delegation in pursuit of these measures.

Thank you.

