



**STATEMENT
BY H.E. AMBASSADOR COSIMO RISI,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ITALY
TO THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT.
Geneva, March 12, 2013**

Madame President,

We wish to express our sincere appreciation for the way you have been conducting your duties.

Italy aligns itself with the statement delivered earlier by the European Union. There are some issues we would like to recall from a national point of view, already expressed several times in this chamber.

FMCT is a priority for Italy within the framework of the Conference on Disarmament. Simply put, the reason, as many have already pointed out also in the recent past, is that a Fissile Materials Cut-off Treaty is an instrument to foster both disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation.

The negotiations in the CD of an FMCT are long overdue. Serious matters must be tackled during the negotiations of a successful FMCT and not least among them is the **issue of stockpiles**. This matter should be dealt with during negotiations rather than be a precondition for them. In that way any State would be free to raise questions it considers priority national security concerns. Should the stalemate of this Conference continue a valuable contribution to moving the process forward could come from General Assembly Resolution 67/53 of December 2012 which requests the Secretary-General to establish a group of governmental experts that will make recommendations on possible aspects that could contribute to such a treaty. We do not wish to engage further in the philosophy behind FMCT, a question that has occupied us at least since 1995. In discussing substantively FMCT, and having in mind the Shannon mandate (document CD/1299), in our opinion we should address five issues:

1. **Definitions.** Defining fissile materials is a complex issue but absolutely essential in tackling FMCT. In the past, at least three definitions have been tabled: from the United States, from the Russian Federation and from Switzerland. Also, a definition of fissile materials is

contained in Article XX of the Statute of the International Atomic Energy Agency. So, there is scope for negotiation and for expert input from the IAEA and other institutions specialized in inorganic chemistry and nuclear physics. The general goal should be to arrive at a definition which is broad enough to make an FMCT credible and effective, but not so extensive as to imply unacceptably complex and expensive verification procedures or unnecessary limits to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

2. **Verification.** Provisions on verification are essential to any disarmament and non-proliferation treaty. Here also there is scope for negotiations and for input from experienced quarters, such as the IAEA. More generally, the question of verification is one that has consequences and ramifications in the other four issues we mention in this statement.

3. **Nuclear Fuel.** The navies of at least four Nuclear Weapon States also use highly enriched fissile material as fuel for naval vessels, and not just as explosive for their nuclear warheads. An FMCT negotiation will have to address this problem, to decide whether this fissile material, though comparable chemically and physically to nuclear explosive, should or should not be covered by the provisions of the treaty, and, if it is, how.

4. **Production Plants.** If we are to have a credible cut-off treaty, we must address the problem of production facilities of weapon-grade fissile material. Do we allow in the treaty their decommissioning or could we envisage their conversion? Is their conversion economically and technically feasible? How do we regulate the matter of inspections of production plants? Here also outside expertise would be fundamental for our work.

5. **Stockpiles.** Stockpiles are the real stumbling block of any future negotiation on FMCT as it has emerged during previous sessions of the Conference. Should the treaty be a simple cut-off or should it also contain provisions on existing stockpiles, as we would in fact prefer? And, if yes, what kind of provisions? The views expressed so far have been radically different, but in our line of work nothing is ever black or white. Even simply reflecting on this question and thinking it through should provide us with clues on possible compromise solutions.

If in this Conference we will have the possibility to conduct serious, in-depth discussions on the five issues we have just mentioned and arrive at some provisional understandings on at least some of them, the outline of an FMCT will gradually appear, in spite of not having formally begun to negotiate.

Thank you for your attention.