Mr. Chairman,

There is consensus among NPT member states that the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons must be stopped: Action 15 of the 2010 NPT Review Conference’s Action Plan is unequivocal in its call for an immediate start of FMCT negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament, within the context of an agreed, comprehensive and balanced programme of work.

The issue remains one the priorities of the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI). In NPDI’s “Berlin Declaration” of April 2011, we jointly declared an FMCT an “indispensable step on the way towards a nuclear weapon free world.” The Berlin Declaration also listed a number of initiatives we had taken to facilitate the commencement of FMCT negotiations.

Mr. Chairman,

NPDI members consider this Preparatory Committee, which starts the new review cycle, a good opportunity to inform all NPT member states on NPDI’s views on, as well as past and current activities in support of, the commencement of FMCT negotiations.

In our joint working paper, published as Working Paper No. 10 on 17 April, NPDI members note:
- that an FMCT should, preferably, be negotiated in the Conference on Disarmament;
that national and regional security concerns, as well as other issues of dissent, must not prevent the start of FMCT negotiations;
- that non-NPT members need to be kept involved;
- that – in light of the CD’s persistent inability to agree on a programme of work – we are “currently consulting on options” for FMCT negotiations, and
- that moratorium on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices are a most useful intermediate step which can create a de-facto FMCT world.

Mr. Chairman,

The joint working paper also contains one concrete operative proposal. Two NPDI members have proposed holding scientific experts’ meetings on FMCT in 2012. The first meeting, organized by Germany, will take place on 29 and 30 May in Geneva. A second meeting, also in Geneva and organized by the Netherlands, will follow in June.

With full support from all NPDI members, we strongly encourage all NPT member states to participate in these meetings. Let me stress that they will be of a strictly technical-scientific nature, are not intended to replace proper FMCT negotiations, and are without prejudice to any national positions during future negotiations.

I thank you.