

ITALY

16/05/06

We look forward to the focused, structural debate on FMCT ahead of us and express our appreciation for your efforts in preparation of this event.

The European Union – including Italy - as well as many other countries have already expressed their general views on the FMCT in the previous sessions dedicated to nuclear disarmament. Indeed an FMCT is an integral part of the nuclear disarmament/arms control process as well as of the non-proliferation process. It is a priority (or the priority) for many delegations, and is ripe for negotiation. The concept of banning the production of fissile materials for weapons enjoys – we believe – a large consensus.

I shall not repeat today the arguments which make the negotiation of an FMCT the priority for us. We have reached a stage where we should go beyond the advocacy of a treaty and rather explore its main features. We welcome the fact that some delegations have included one or more experts in their delegations and we appreciate the papers that have already been circulated. We have read some of them and as a first preliminary comment we would underline the seriousness of the effort made both by delegations and by experts. The documents highlight the complexity of the issue, its multifaceted nature and its direct impact on some fundamental security interests. And therefore the difficulty of our task. Agreeing on the “core business” of a treaty should be our first endeavour; definitions will be another fundamental part of the process. On that basis it will be possible, as it is indicated in one of the papers, to identify additional features of a Treaty such as verifiability and scope. We are not starting from scratch: the international community has been working on these issues for more than 50 years; the NPT, the relevance of which is recognized universally even by countries not party to it, is for us a fundamental term of reference. The excellent preparatory work done by the Presidency, delegations and experts, as well as the precious experience matured within IAEA will be key elements for our work.

For its part Italy has included, in its delegation, an expert from our country, Prof. Maurizio Martellini of the University of Como, and has already circulated two documents. The first regards the general features of a treaty and is focused on the relevance of an FMCT to prevent nuclear terrorism. The second is more specific and concerns the question of the entry into force of a possible Treaty. We look forward to the discussions ahead hoping their results will take the shape of a harmonious mosaic and not become an irresolvable puzzle.