STATEMENT

BY

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AT THE PLENARY MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

INTRODUCING THE WORKING DOCUMENT PRESENTED BY BULGARIA, GERMANY, MEXICO, NETHERLANDS, ROMANIA, SWEDEN, TURKEY AND SPAIN

ON A

Treaty to Prohibit the Production of Fissile Material for Nuclear Weapons and other Nuclear Explosive Devices (FMCT)

Geneva, 16 June 2011

(Check against delivery)
Madame President,

I have asked for the floor today in order to introduce a document tabled by Bulgaria, Germany, Mexico, Netherlands, Romania, Sweden, Turkey and Spain. Last week I have had the pleasure of circulating it via e-mail to all Delegations. This document will shortly be distributed as CD/1910.

It is a working paper containing elements of a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty. As is well known our eight countries are in favour of an immediate start of negotiations in the CD of an FMCT. We deeply regret that due to reasons well known to us all this body has not been able to start these negotiations and is not performing the task for which it was created.

The current paralysis and the lack of prospects for action are calling the credibility and thereby the very existence of this negotiating forum into question.

We are however of the opinion that despite the paralysis in this body the international community should continue its preparations for the negotiations of an FMCT. We welcome in that regard the activities of many different countries and NGO's like f.e. the Japanese-Australian initiative to host a series of side events on specific issues concerning an FMCT. We therefore thought it useful to circulate a paper with our thoughts as to how certain elements of a future FMCT could look like. We are well aware that this is not the first time that a proposal or a document on an FMCT of any kind, formal or informal, sees the light. We are certainly not proposing completely new avenues of approach with our document. But we hope that a comprehensive reflection of our common thoughts on some of the important elements of an FMCT will also be helpful to other states in preparation of future negotiations.
Any useful debate on the FMCT issue should start by highlighting the elements which unite us before focussing on the points of disagreement.

The conclusion of an FMCT would be a significant contribution, a indispensable step, towards a world without nuclear weapons.. It is therefore of great importance to the international community to start these negotiations. Inactivity or passiveness is not a reasonable option. Not as long as the mere existence of nuclear weapons continues to be a threat to the survival of human kind.

One can hardly challenge these assertions and these are the starting points of the working paper we are introducing today. As we all know, other aspects of the matter are open to a variety of opinions and our document acknowledges that there are different options one can choose.

For example, when it comes to “definitions”, the working paper takes an open stand on the issue, in the understanding that our final choice on the scope of the Treaty will decide its impact and implementation.

In the same vein, the paper also takes up the issue of stockpiles by listing several options.

Other connected issues are tackled as well, such as transfers of fissile material and facilities related to its production and storage. Finally, the paper refers to issues related to transparency and verification.

If you browse through the paper, you will find that there is no section on conclusions. This is because –let me insist on it- it is not a position paper. Our intention at this stage is just to make a contribution to the ongoing debate and to prepare the ground for negotiations on an FMCT.

As such, we hope that the distinguished delegates find it useful.