(Please check against delivery)

Statement by H.E. Mr. Mari Amano
Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Japan
to the Conference on Disarmament

(FMCT)

Geneva, 12 March 2013
Madame President,

Last Tuesday, I stated that a cumulative process of practical steps and concrete disarmament measures is the appropriate approach to advance towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons. Japan considers a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other explosive devices as the next logical step in that process. Today, I would like to further develop my thought on this issue which is broadly considered by the international community as the most mature instrument to be negotiated. Since there are many different aspects that make up an FMCT, I will summarize our basic position on the four major ones.

Madame President,

(Core obligations)

First, there is a consensus that a ban on the future production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or nuclear explosive devices would be the core obligation of an FMCT. As a logical consequence of a ban on “future production”, the entry into force of an FMCT would obligate the states possessing fissile material production facilities for nuclear weapon purposes to close down, decommission, or convert those facilities to non-nuclear weapon purposes. Any “reversion” of such facilities back to nuclear weapon use, or the “reversion” of fissile materials that states have voluntarily declared as excess for national security needs should be banned. Similarly, the “diversion” of existing and future stocks of fissile material for non-nuclear weapon purposes should be banned too. Furthermore, the transfer and assistance to another state in the production of fissile material for nuclear weapon purposes should also be subject to prohibition.

(Definition)

Second, bearing in mind the intent and purpose of an FMCT, we have to make sure that no legal loopholes are created by inadvertently choosing narrow definitions. We thus believe that Article XX of the IAEA statute on “Special fissionable materials” could provide a base for a definition of fissile material and would not adversely affect the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

(Verification)

Third, regarding verification, we believe there are four possible categories that need to be taken into consideration. These categories of verification would confirm (1) that the amount of fissile material stock for nuclear weapons has not increased from the date of the treaty’s entry into force; (2) that the reactors and facilities for the
production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or nuclear explosive devices that are
closed down, decommissioned, or converted to non-nuclear weapons uses remain in
this state; (3) that fissile material that has voluntarily been declared as excess as a
result of nuclear disarmament is not reverted back to nuclear weapon purposes; and
(4) that fissile material for non-nuclear weapon purposes has not been diverted to
nuclear weapons.

(Stocks)

Fourth, as far as the stocks is concerned, we recognize that an FMCT should at least
prohibit (1) the transfer of stocks for nuclear weapons to a third country; (2) the
diversion to nuclear-weapon purposes of stocks for conventional military use; and (3)
the “reversion” back to nuclear-weapon purposes of stocks declared as excess.

I know that these important issues, particularly the treatment of stocks, have
divergent views among the members. Regardless, these issues can be resolved within
the negotiations based on the Shannon Mandate, which has already been agreed to by
a majority of member states. Japan intends to push forward our position in
negotiations once they begin.

Madame President,

Before concluding my intervention, allow me to refer to the Canadian resolution
adopted at the 67th UN General Assembly. A group of government experts (GGE) on
an FMCT will be established and it will commence its work next year. Japan earnestly
hopes it will provide new momentum and help the CD to begin its substantive work.
Notwithstanding this, it is necessary for us to acknowledge that the CD has failed for
many years to start FMCT negotiations despite wide support for their commencement.
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 and it will only accelerate attempts to divert
it. From this perspective, I would like to stress to all the members of the CD the
necessity of overcoming the present state of affairs as soon as possible. At the same
time, pending the commencement of negotiations, Japan urges all states possessing
nuclear weapons to declare and maintain a moratorium on the production of fissile
materials for nuclear weapons purposes. It will strengthen momentum towards the
establishment of the treaty.

I thank you, Madame President.