STATEMENT BY PAKISTAN

CD Plenary Meeting;

12 March 2013

Madam President,

1. Since this is the first time my delegation takes the floor under your Presidency let me congratulate you on the assumption of the office of the President of the Conference on Disarmament. I also wish to acknowledge the transparent and efficient manner you have conducted your work as the President. You can count on the cooperation of my delegation.

2. We also welcome the statement delivered on behalf of the Women’s International League for Peace.

Madam President,

3. The multilateral processes in the field of disarmament will strengthen international security and meet global expectations only when they are based on the principles of non-discrimination and respect for the security interests of all states. Successful multilateral agreements require compromises and consensus. But these cannot be one sided, based on double standards and undermine the fundamental security interests of states.

4. As such a Treaty on fissile material divorced from this reality and shorn of the content that would make it a true instrument of international security holds no appeal for us.

5. We do not believe that any artificial distinction between the issues ripe for negotiation or not ripe for negotiation can be drawn up. Unless all agree on a state of ripeness, it is simply an imaginary phenomenon.

Madam President,

6. It would be useful to reflect on the history of Fissile Material issue in the past decades and see how any progress on this issue in multilateral disarmament forums was stonewalled. If proposals to bring the question of fissile material into arms control framework were accepted in the 1960s or 70s it could have stanched the vertical proliferation of nuclear weapons and dampened the cold-war nuclear arms race.

7. However, the major powers did not brook any impediment to their pursuit of strategic sufficiency in fissile material stocks. Now, after having developed huge numbers of nuclear weapons as well as stocks of fissile material that can be quickly converted into nuclear warheads – these major powers are ready to conclude a treaty that will only ban future production of fissile material.

8. This follows the pattern of CTBT where major powers agreed to a test ban only when the results generated by the thousands of nuclear tests and the possibility of tests in laboratory conditions obviated the need for further underground nuclear tests.

Madam President,

9. With respect to a proposed FMT the key issue confronting us is whether we want it to be a partial and selective non-proliferation instrument or a step that contributes towards nuclear disarmament. The negotiations for the Fissile Material Treaty, cannot be divorced from the objectives which for so long have sustained the demand for such a Treaty. These
objectives were, and continue to remain, the promotion of nuclear disarmament. A Treaty on fissile material which only serves the interests of those who now have a glut of fissile materials for weapons purposes cannot be a contribution to nuclear disarmament unless its scope explicitly includes the reduction in size of the existing stockpiles of fissile materials.

10. A simple ban on the future production of fissile material would leave an asymmetry in stocks. To any objective analyst, it seems evident that the aim of a Treaty which bans future production only would be merely to “lock-in” the advantage of those with the larger stockpiles – globally or regionally. If we want this treaty to contribute to nuclear disarmament it has to cover the question of existing stocks.

Madam President,

11. The proposed treaty would have far-reaching implications for the national security of many CD members and particularly Pakistan. We have explained already in detail how developments of the past few years have accentuated our security concerns. The magnitude and impact of these steps have sought to be downplayed. It is however not lost on us.

12. Accordingly, from our perspective the proposal for a fissile material cut off or a simple ban on the future production that ignores the all important issue of existing stocks will contribute neither to nuclear disarmament nor address regional asymmetries. Such a measure will not even be a true non-proliferation instrument since this limited scope would allow the diversion of existing stocks as well as future accumulations, through routes opened up by special dispensations, for nuclear weapons production.

Madam President,

13. We have heard repeated references to the Shannon Mandate as the basis for addressing the issue of stockpiles. The kind of constructive ambiguity enshrined in the Shannon mandate may have been sufficient in 1995 or shortly thereafter but certainly not in the present circumstances. In view of the discriminatory arrangements undertaken in our region, that we have referred to in detail in the past, the issue cannot be addressed by any kind of constructive ambiguity but needs to be addressed in a very direct manner.

15. We have noted that some countries in the past have talked about taking negotiations on this issue outside the CD. The wisdom of this approach can be judged from similar other experiments. States that are not part of negotiations that impact their fundamental national security interests will have no interest in consenting to outcomes engineered without their participation.

Madam President,

16. In our view, the decisions of the First Special Session on Disarmament remain the only international framework adopted by consensus governing the multilateral disarmament machinery as well as its objectives and principles. Pakistan, along with a vast majority of UN member states, including 118 countries of the Non Aligned Movement, believes that the issue of Nuclear Disarmament is ripe for negotiations in the CD. This is the principle purpose of the CD and it must get on with it.

I thank you Madam President.