Views of the Republic of Korea on 
A Treaty Banning the Production of Fissile Material for 
Nuclear Weapons or Other Nuclear Explosive Devices

I. Basic Position

The Republic of Korea (ROK) shares the view that negotiating a Treaty Banning the Production of Fissile Material for Nuclear Weapons or Other Nuclear Explosive Devices (FMCT) is the most urgent task in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation since the indefinite extension of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in 1995 and the adoption of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) in 1996. The international community should commence negotiations on an FMCT at the earliest possible date for the adoption of a multilateral, non-discriminatory, and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty.

Pending the adoption and implementation of an FMCT, all States with nuclear weapon capabilities should voluntarily declare moratoria on the production of fissile material for weapon purposes without further delay as an interim measure, if they have not yet done so.

The ROK supports the establishment of a Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) in accordance with United Nations General Assembly Resolution 67/53, and hopes that the GGE would play a valuable role in facilitating discussions and negotiations.

II. Position on Major Issues

• Scope of the Control (Definition)

The ROK supports a ban on not only the production but also the acquisition and transfer of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. Such a treaty would establish a legal basis upon which to control the acquisition and transfer of such material by the non-NPT parties. The ROK also supports a ban on the use of nuclear material subject to verification by an
FMCT for manufacturing nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. Such a provision would create a legal basis to prevent nuclear material manufactured for peaceful purposes from being diverted for military use.

Regarding the definition of fissile material that is to be banned, it would be a good approach to include therein un-irradiated direct use material and other special fissionable material to be specified by the international community in the future.

States have the right to produce, use, store, and process fissile material for peaceful uses under international verification system. Therefore, peaceful use activities currently conducted under the safeguards system, such as the production and storage of nuclear fuel for research reactors and the use and development of MOX fuel, should not be hindered by an FMCT.

- **Existing Stockpiles**

  With regard to existing stockpiles, the ROK believes that it would be best to first commence the negotiations on a treaty, and discuss the issue of existing stockpiles at a later stage during the negotiations.

- **Verification**

  Facilities and activities related to the production, storage, process and usage of banned material should be subject to verification. In discussing concrete methodology for inspections, such factors as effectiveness and cost should be taken into account.

  The ROK supports the approach of utilizing the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) as an inspector. The IAEA will be able to conduct inspection as set out in an FMCT. It would be more effective if the treaty grants the IAEA full authority, including over the budget. However, it would be necessary to draw a clear line between the Agency’s existing safeguards mission and the new mission under an FMCT.

  An FMCT should include appropriate verification mechanisms. With regard
to methods of verification, it would be possible to apply all the means set out in the existing Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement and Additional Protocol (INFCIRC/153, 540).

• **Ratification Requirements**

  It is essential that non-NPT States, in particular the States with nuclear capabilities, participate in an FMCT. With regard to the ratification requirements, taking into account the lessons learned from the CTBT, the ROK suggests that the treaty require the ratification of a certain number of countries including the five Nuclear Weapon States, based on a practical approach.

• **Voluntary Moratorium**

  Pending the entry into force of an FMCT and verification under the treaty, all States with nuclear weapon capabilities should voluntarily declare moratoria on the production of fissile material for weapon purposes without further delay as an interim measure, if they have not yet done so. /END/