Ukraine’s views on a Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty (FMCT)

Ukraine attaches great importance to enhancing international peace and security and therefore strongly supports full and effective implementation of legal and institutional multilateral mechanisms to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons and related materials, equipment and technologies. We assume that the total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only absolute guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear war.

In this regard the issue of the Treaty banning the production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices (FMCT) receives our special attention.

Being concerned about the gradual erosion of multilateral mechanisms in the field of disarmament and arms control in recent years, which affects the level of mutual trust between UN Member States, Ukraine continues to support the early commencement of international negotiations of the FMCT at the Conference on Disarmament (CD) within a balanced work programme. Until then we call upon all States concerned to declare and uphold a moratorium on the production of such material.

We welcome the rich discussions on this issue in the framework of the UNGA and the CD, and in particular appreciate the readiness of the states to establish the GGE according to the UN GA Resolution 67/53 with the aim to elaborate recommendations on possible aspects that could contribute but not negotiate the FMCT.

These recommendations would definitely create a good foundation for the substantial work of the CD in order to draft out a universally applicable, non-discriminatory and internationally verifiable Treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.

Ukraine regards that the FMCT should reflect a balance between nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation dimensions and that the issue of existing stocks of fissile materials should be addressed during the negotiation process, and should not be used to block any disarmament negotiating forum.

A draft FMCT, in our view, should include the following principal provisions:

- prohibition of the production of highly enriched uranium (contains not less than 20% of U-235 isotope) and plutonium (the Pu-238 isotope content is less than 80%);

- an effective regime to verify compliance with the Treaty, including submission of initial declarations, regular inspections of declared facilities,
as well as the inspections on-demand to detect possible prohibited activities at undeclared objects;

- initial declaration of all objects of enrichment and reprocessing of uranium and plutonium, regardless of their current status (active, closed, dismantled or converted facilities);
- to ensure cost effectiveness through the exclusion of all completely dismantled objects from the inspection regime;
- inspections on-demand for detection of possible prohibited activities at undeclared objects should be carried out in accordance with the controlled access procedure in order to prevent leakage of information, sensitive for nuclear non-proliferation or national security interests;
- future inspection regime should not create any additional obligations in this field for non-nuclear states that are parties to the IAEA Comprehensive safeguards agreement.