

Preparatory Committee for the 2026 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

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Towards a fissile material cut-off treaty: advancing the objective of stopping fissile material production for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices in the 2026 Non-Proliferation Treaty review cycle

**Working paper submitted by Argentina, Canada, Ecuador,
El Salvador, Japan, Peru, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea
and the European Union**

I. Context

1. Sustained calls for the immediate commencement and early conclusion of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament of a treaty banning the production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, or fissile material cut-off treaty, stem from nearly 70 years of international mobilization, from as early as 1957 and pursued, inter alia, by the General Assembly at its first special session on disarmament. The adoption of Assembly resolution [48/75 L](#) in 1993, by providing a framework for the commencement of such negotiations, has helped establish the achievement of a fissile material cut-off treaty as one of the most urgent, concrete and logical steps towards nuclear disarmament.

2. Over the span of three decades, substantial work has been conducted in disarmament forums to advance the definitions on the scope, modalities and parameters of future negotiations and a future treaty, building on expertise developed in research centres and international organizations. Among the most significant outputs were: the report of Ambassador G. Shannon (1995, document [CD/1299](#)) on the establishment of a dedicated ad hoc committee at the Conference on Disarmament; the references to a fissile material cut-off treaty and/or the implementation of moratoriums on fissile material production for military purposes in the 1995 decision from the Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, as well as in the outcome documents of the



Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conferences of 2000¹ and 2010;² and, more recently, the convening of a Group of Governmental Experts in 2014–2015 and of a High-level Expert Preparatory Group in 2017–2018.

3. States in their own capacity have made numerous contributions to the furtherance of this objective: some recurrently help maintain the issue of a fissile material cut-off treaty as high as possible on the nuclear disarmament agenda (i.e. the resolution presented regularly by Canada, Germany and the Netherlands (Kingdom of the) to the First Committee of the General Assembly, which has continued to garner overwhelming cross-regional support throughout the years); some have endeavoured to keep the topic of a fissile material cut-off treaty at the forefront of Non-Proliferation Treaty discussions (i.e. the “Stepping stones for advancing nuclear disarmament” submitted by the Stockholm Initiative for Nuclear Disarmament in March 2020 and the “Open letter to the nuclear-weapons States” issued by the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative in October 2020); and others have put forward draft treaties (the United States of America in 2006 and France in 2015).

4. In addition, the moratoriums declared by four of the five nuclear-weapon States on the production of fissile material for military purposes should assert the prospect of a fissile material cut-off treaty as a logical step towards nuclear disarmament, as per article VI of the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

5. We are committed to continuing to promote comprehensive, balanced and substantive full implementation of the 2010 Review Conference action plan, including all actions related to the cessation of the production of weapons-grade fissile material (actions 15 and 18) and related issues (actions 16 and 17). Downgrading the level of commitment reflected in Non-Proliferation Treaty documents and expected about the cessation of the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons, including the encouragement to initiate a process towards the dismantling or conversion for peaceful uses of facilities for the production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, would be highly concerning.

¹ Action 3 of the 2000 action plan reads: “The necessity of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament on a non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices in accordance with the statement of the Special Coordinator in 1995 and the mandate contained therein, taking into consideration both nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation objectives. The Conference on Disarmament is urged to agree on a programme of work which includes the immediate commencement of negotiations on such a treaty with a view to their conclusion within five years.”

² From the 2010 outcome document (NPT/CONF.2010/50 (Vol. I)), actions 15 to 18, but especially sect. E i., as follows:

- i. The Conference reaffirms the urgent necessity of negotiating and bringing to a conclusion a non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.
 - Action 15: All States agree that the Conference on Disarmament should, within the context of an agreed, comprehensive and balanced programme of work, immediately begin negotiation of a treaty banning the production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices in accordance with the report of the Special Coordinator of 1995 (CD/1299) and the mandate contained therein. Also in this respect, the Review Conference invites the Secretary-General of the United Nations to convene a high-level meeting in September 2010 in support of the work of the Conference on Disarmament.
 - Action 18: All States that have not yet done so are encouraged to initiate a process towards the dismantling or conversion for peaceful uses of facilities for the production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.

II. Objectives for the 2026 Non-Proliferation Treaty review cycle

6. The Non-Proliferation Treaty community should continue to assert the cessation of the production of weapons-grade fissile material as one of the most documented and actionable priorities towards the ultimate goal of a world without nuclear weapons.

7. In this regard, and in addition to our call for the immediate commencement and early conclusion of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament of a treaty banning the production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, in accordance with document [CD/1299](#) and the mandate contained therein, we call on all States concerned to declare and uphold an immediate moratorium on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.

8. Despite urgent calls and multiple advocacy efforts, including through General Assembly resolution [78/28](#), adopted with the support of 155 States, the Conference on Disarmament has not yet commenced negotiations on such a treaty. However, this does not in any way prevent States concerned from declaring or maintaining existing moratoriums on the production of fissile material production for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices pending the entry into force of such a treaty. On the contrary, declaring and upholding such moratoriums greatly help: (a) to further demonstrate international adherence to the cessation of the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices with a view to the commencement of negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty at the Conference on Disarmament; and (b) to contribute to materializing the commitment of the nuclear-weapon States to nuclear disarmament under the Non-Proliferation Treaty. The 2026 Non-Proliferation Treaty review cycle should therefore:

- Acknowledge the work that has been achieved on this matter in recent years, including the reports from the 2015 Group of Governmental Experts and 2018 High-level Expert Preparatory Group, and encourage further initiatives, which shall build upon them.
- Urge the Conference on Disarmament to launch negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty in accordance with document [CD/1299](#) and the mandate contained therein, at the earliest possible time, in any case before the next Review Conference.
- Acknowledge the value of regional dialogues and initiatives in favour of a fissile material cut-off treaty, including the European Union project (Council decision 2017/2284 of 11 December 2017), supporting the efforts of the Office for Disarmament Affairs to facilitate dialogue at the regional level among States in the African, the Asia-Pacific and the Latin America and Caribbean regions.
- Call on all States that have not done so to “initiate a process towards the dismantling or conversion for peaceful uses of facilities for the production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices” (action 18).
- Underline the complementarity between both prospects (negotiation of a fissile material cut-off treaty on the one hand, upholding of corresponding moratoriums on the other), building on the past commitment formulated in actions 15 and 18 of the 2010 outcome document.