Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty

Conference on Disarmament

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The production of fissile material: the state of play
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HEU

Military Plutonium

Russia
United States
Others
The production of fissile material: the state of play

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Countries</th>
<th>Moratorium?</th>
<th>Facilities?</th>
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<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>Dismantled</td>
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<td>Russia</td>
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<td>United Kingdom</td>
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<td>DPRK</td>
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<td>Israel</td>
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<td>Pakistan</td>
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A cut-off Treaty? History of the concept and recent developments

- **UN resolution 78/57 L** (1993): “non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices”

- **Shannon Mandate** (1995): *ad hoc* committee to negotiate an FMCT by the end of the 1995 session.
A cut-off Treaty? History of the concept and recent developments

• **1998**: Ad Hoc Committee established to negotiate a treaty in accordance with the Shannon Mandate

• **1999**: Ad Hoc Committee did not reconvene

• **2009**: adoption of programme of work, creation of a working group to “negotiate a treaty banning the production of fissile material ... on the basis of [the Shannon Mandate]”
A cut-off Treaty? History of the concept and recent developments

- **2010**: Reference to FMCT by the action plan adopted by the 2010 NPT Review Conference: "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.”
A cut-off Treaty? History of the concept and recent developments

- **2014 / 2015**: Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) discusses recommendations for advancing FMCT negotiations. Production of a report:
  - Legally binding, non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable
  - Core interdiction: prohibit the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive device
  - Work on definition of key terms, such as fissile material
A cut-off Treaty? History of the concept and recent developments

• **2017/2018**: High-level FMCT Expert Preparatory Group
  • Recommendations of the High-level FMCT Expert Preparatory Group advocates that negotiations for the FMCT should continue, despite the lack of significant improvements in negotiations.
Roadblocks and enduring challenges

• **Procedure**: adoption of a programme of work, disagreement on the general issue of nuclear disarmament, the prevention of an arms race in outer space (PAROS) and negative security assurances (NSAs).

• **Venue**: frustration led some countries to call for negotiations outside of the CD

• **Participation**: all NWS and possessors, otherwise, little value?

• **Verification**: Shannon mandate in favour of verifiable Treaty.

• **Stocks**: Shannon Mandate has been generally interpreted as leaving the possibility to define the scope of the Treaty to the negotiation phase

• **Scope**: “for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices”
Renewed support and way forward

• EU support on the ground: Council Decision 2017/2284:
  • Facilitation of dialogue at the regional level among States in the African, the Asia-Pacific and the Latin America and Caribbean regions;
  • Development of a sense of ownership of the issue among States in these regions;
  • Involvement of relevant regional organisations in the discussions on a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices to be negotiated in the framework of the Conference on Disarmament;
  • Facilitation of the transmission of knowledge between academia, civil society organisations and Member States relating to fissile materials.
Renewed support and way forward

- Think tank work for 20 years to propose solutions, alternatives and scenarios:
  - International Panel on fissile material, UNIDIR, Belfer Center, SIPRI, VERTIC, PRIF, Oxford Research Group
- IAEA propositions
- Draft produced by states
Renewed support and way forward

• Working Paper, Stepping stones for advancing nuclear disarmament, March 2020:
  • Calls Nuclear-Weapon States and Nuclear Possessor States to show leadership to unblock negotiations on a treaty prohibiting fissile material production

• Joint working paper from NPDI – Recommendation for 10th RevCon (October 2020):
  • The early commencement of FMCT negotiations is a shared priority for all State Parties to the NPT, and more generally, for the international community »

• P5 process
Conclusion

• A FMCT will aid the cause of nuclear disarmament by making the general trend of reduction of nuclear arsenals irreversible

• It would formalize the moratorium of some countries on fissile material production and limit the pool of materials available for manufacturing nuclear weapons

• Quantitative vs qualitative restrictions