

Welcoming Remarks by H.E. Mr. Hitoshi Kikawada,
Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs
at the Opening Session of the International Partnership for
Nuclear Disarmament Verification, Tokyo Plenary Meeting
on June 28, 2016

Excellencies,
Distinguished guests,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Good Morning.

I would like to welcome all of you to the third plenary meeting of the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification.

Today, we, from both nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States, gather here to get closer to our common goal, a world free of nuclear weapons. Toward this goal, we should steadily implement concrete and practical measures with close cooperation among us. The verification

system is one of them, as it effectively addresses nuclear disarmament challenges.

Until now, nuclear disarmament verification has been conducted by the U.S. and Russia to check the implementation of treaty obligations. In time to come, however, a multilateral verification system involving non-nuclear-weapon States will become necessary. So the task of this meeting will be very important when nuclear weapons are reduced to a low number.

Furthermore, this initiative gives us opportunities to share our knowledge on existing verification methods and technologies, and to identify measures enabling such verification. These collaborative works contribute to fostering trust and cooperation between nuclear- and non-nuclear-weapons States. Such knowledge-sharing and confidence-building will create a basis for further progress on nuclear disarmament.

I am looking forward to outcomes of the three working groups at this meeting. The outcomes will be converged and interwoven, which creates synergy between policy, practice

and technology. I believe that scientific knowledge and practical experience lead to an optimum solution toward nuclear disarmament for the world.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Please remember one month ago. It was a historic event that the incumbent president of the United States visited the first site of atomic bombing. On May 27th, in Hiroshima, President Obama said; "Among those nations like my own that hold nuclear stock piles, we must have the courage to escape the logic of fear, and pursue a world without them. We may not realize this goal in my lifetime. But persistent effort can roll back the possibility of catastrophe." Prime Minister Abe responded; "We are determined to realize a world free of nuclear weapons. No matter how long and how difficult the road will be, it is the responsibility of us who live in the present to continue to make efforts."

Embracing the message of President Obama and Prime Minister Abe, I think the Japanese people, and people around

the world, should pursue the ideal future for our children even if it seems impossible at present. I strongly hope that this meeting will be an exemplary case in which nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States can engage in fruitful discussions and work hand in hand toward a world free of nuclear weapons. Here lies the seed that, with our dedication and belief, will bear the fruit, a world without nuclear weapons.

Thank you.