

STATEMENT BY H.E. Mr. Yoshimasa HAYASHI
MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF JAPAN
2022 High Level Segment of the Conference on Disarmament

Madam President,
Distinguished colleagues,

I would like to express our appreciation and reaffirm our support to Your Excellency Ambassador Alicia Victoria ARANGO OLMOS, President of the Conference on Disarmament, as well as Madam Secretary-General of the CD and her team for their valuable work during the time of the COVID-19 pandemics.

Madam President,
The CD is the only multilateral negotiating forum on disarmament with the participation of key stakeholders, including all nuclear weapon States and nuclear-possessing countries. The international community should revitalize this disarmament forum by breaking the prolonged stalemate and building upon our past discussions. In this regard, Japan welcomes the adoption of the decision on the work of the CD for 2022 under the efforts made during the Presidency of both China and Colombia.

Madam President,
With regard to the situation in Ukraine, the series of Russia's acts are in violation of international law and an infringement of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Any unilateral change of the status quo by force is totally unacceptable. This is an extremely serious situation that shakes the foundation of international order not only in Europe but also in Asia. Along with our G7 partners, we strongly condemn the action taken by Russia.

Japan also expresses serious concerns over North Korea's continued development of nuclear and missile capabilities including the latest launch of IRBM-class ballistic missile on January 30th. It poses a serious challenge to the international non-proliferation regime. Also, North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile activities are clear violations of a series of UN Security Council resolutions. Japan reaffirms its strong commitment to the complete, verifiable, and irreversible dismantlement of North Korea's all weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles of all ranges. Japan urges North Korea to abide by all relevant UN Security Council resolutions and return at an early date to full compliance with the NPT and IAEA safeguards.

The security environment surrounding Japan is rapidly becoming even more severe. The build-up of nuclear forces in a non-transparent manner and the technological advancement of nuclear weapons delivery systems that adversely affect Japan's security and regional stability are only a few examples of such activities.

Madam President,

Against this backdrop, we attach importance to thoroughly discussing ways of arms control including those of increasing transparency, while ensuring a desirable security environment for Japan. We will continue to discuss with relevant states in order to advance arms control and disarmament efforts that ensure the involvement of relevant countries.

Japan will also continue to call on all states to enhance confidence building measures such as increasing the transparency of their military capabilities and policies. From this perspective, Japan welcomes the fact that the United States has unilaterally resumed releasing its nuclear weapons stockpile data.

Madam President,

As the only country to have suffered atomic bombings during war, Japan is strongly committed to leading international efforts toward a world without nuclear weapons. The possible reversal of the continued downward trend of the number of nuclear weapons since its peak during the Cold War is another deeply worrying factor. To avoid further deterioration of the current status, Japan reiterates the importance of the immediate commencement of negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons based on the Shannon Mandate. Pending the commencement of negotiations, Japan also calls for a moratorium on fissile material production.

Moreover, Japan urges all states to sign and ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, which has not entered into force for the past 25 years. Pending its entry into force, Japan also urges all relevant states to declare or maintain existing moratoriums on nuclear weapon test explosions.

Madam President,

It has become increasingly important under the current severe security situation that the international community maintains and strengthens the NPT. Japan has made a series of efforts to this end, such as the submission of the United Nations General Assembly resolutions on the elimination of nuclear weapons, as well as close cooperation through the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative and the Stockholm Initiative. At the next Review Conference, Japan will spare no effort to contribute to the adoption of a final document.

Prime Minister KISHIDA announced the establishment of the International Group of Eminent Persons for a World without Nuclear Weapons. Under his leadership, Japan aims to foster further international discussions by gaining a possible form of engagement of incumbent and former political leaders around the globe.

Madam President,

At this difficult time, it is urgently needed to reinvigorate the CD to build confidence. Japan looks forward to further cooperating with the member States and the President toward this endeavor.

Thank you. (END)