

Address by Foreign Minister KAMIKAWA Yoko at the first session of the Fourth Meeting of the “International Group of Eminent Persons for a World without Nuclear Weapons ”(IGEP)

Thank you for attending the fourth meeting of the International Group of Eminent Persons for a World without Nuclear Weapons, or the IGEP. The Port of Yokohama, which you can see from today's venue, opened as an international trade port in 1859 and has continued to attract technology, culture, and people from Japan and abroad as a window to the rest of the world over its long history of more than 150 years. We are very pleased to welcome you here in Yokohama after meetings in Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Looking around the international community, division and conflict have become even more severe due to Russia's aggression against Ukraine, the missile and nuclear development of North Korea, and furthermore, due to increased tensions in the Middle East. Circumstances surrounding nuclear disarmament are becoming increasingly challenging. However, it is precisely because of this situation that we must stress the importance of the NPT regime as the cornerstone of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

I hear you will further deepen the discussion to compile the final outcome of this process in view of the 2026 NPT Review Conference at this meeting, based on the discussions in the previous meeting in Nagasaki.

The IGEP is a prime opportunity in which participants from both nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon States can sit down and address fundamental issues on nuclear disarmament together. I myself would have liked to attend this meeting and listen to your discussions if time permitted. Unfortunately, this was not possible, but I sincerely look forward to receiving your valuable proposals next year, based on frank and candid discussions. I am convinced that your proposals will surely increase the momentum of the international community and will lead to steps towards the realization of a world without nuclear weapons.

I would like to take this opportunity to briefly introduce Japan's continuing efforts. Just a year ago at the G7 Hiroshima Summit, the “G7 Leaders’ Hiroshima Vision on Nuclear Disarmament” was issued. Then, Prime Minister Kishida stated in his speech at the UN General Assembly General Debate last September, that it is crucial to have nuclear-weapon States engaged in concrete nuclear disarmament measures and that Japan will promote dialogue between nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States as a non-permanent member of the Security Council. As part of this effort, I also visited New York to chair the Ministerial Meeting of the United Nations Security Council on “Nuclear Disarmament and Non-Proliferation” this March.

In this meeting, I announced the establishment of the “FMCT Friends” composed of 12 countries under Prime Minister Kishida’s leadership. We will continue to pursue realistic and practical efforts, taking the sage views of the IGEP as guidance.

Finally, I hope that you enjoy the port city of Yokohama, and deepen the discussion towards the final outcome as the IGEP.