

The International Group of  
Eminent Persons for a World without Nuclear Weapons (IGEP)  
Opening Remarks by Foreign Minister IWAYA Takeshi

March 30, 2025  
[Provisional Translation]

The esteemed members of the International Group of Eminent Persons and Rector Mogherini, welcome to Japan. Thank you very much for participating in the 6th and final meeting of the International Group of Eminent Persons for a World without Nuclear Weapons today.

This year marks the 80th anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Given the current severe international situation, I believe that now more than ever we need to take steps towards realizing a world without nuclear weapons to prevent such tragedies from ever happening again. As the only country to have experienced the devastation of war through nuclear weapons, Japan is determined to lead such efforts in the international community.

I myself have heard from my fellow Diet members and members of civil society about their frustration over the lack of progress in nuclear disarmament, and their earnest desire for Japan, a country that knows the tragedy of nuclear weapons, to take leadership towards a world without nuclear weapons.

Regarding the Meeting of States Parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) held earlier this month, my government made the decision not to participate as an observer. This was an extremely difficult decision made after thoroughly considering our historical mission as the only country to have experienced the horror of nuclear devastation in war, and our responsibility to protect the lives and property of our citizens, as well as Japan's independence and peace.

Japan's commitment to steadily advancing step by step towards the ideal of realizing a world without nuclear weapons remains unwavering.

My government firmly believes that the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), with participation from both nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States, is the only universal framework towards a world without nuclear weapons, and that it is the most realistic and effective to advance our global nuclear disarmament efforts under this framework.

The 11th NPT Review Conference will be held next year. Next year also marks the 50th anniversary of Japan's ratification of the NPT. My government intends to look into seriously the recommendations compiled by the International Group of Eminent Persons and continue to pursue realistic and practical efforts towards a world without nuclear weapons.

In my hometown of Beppu City in Oita Prefecture, there used to be a hot spring sanatorium for atomic bomb survivors, called the Beppu Atomic Bomb Center, which was the world's first such facility. At that time, deeply injured survivors were healed by the gentle hot spring waters of Beppu. I have heard that many people came to think of Beppu as their second home. However, the survivors are aging. This center has already closed, and sadly, the number of people who remember what it was like at that time is decreasing year by year.

Last year, Nihon Hidankyo was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for their contributions. The long-standing efforts of the survivors to promote understanding of the realities of the atomic bombings have become a solid foundation for a world without nuclear weapons, and we are deeply grateful for this.

With cooperation of all of you here and beyond, we will steadily advance step by step on the path towards a world without nuclear weapons. With that determination, I will conclude my remarks. Thank you for your attention.

End.