

STATEMENT BY TOSHIO SANO
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TO THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

AT THE FIRST COMMITTEE OF THE 69TH SESSION
OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

GENERAL DEBATE

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Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, I would like to extend my congratulations to you, Ambassador Rattray, on your assumption of the Chairmanship to this important First Committee. I assure you of my Delegation's full support and cooperation, and look forward to closely working with you and all other colleagues to carry out meaningful tasks.

Mr. Chairman,

The overall objective of nuclear disarmament is to achieve a safer world without nuclear weapons, and for that purpose, it is important to take realistic and practical steps in a progressive manner. Japan, together with other members of the NPDI, has worked actively to strengthen the NPT regime, and this April hosted the NPDI Ministerial Meeting in Hiroshima. The ministers issued the "Hiroshima Statement", which includes realistic and practical approaches towards nuclear disarmament.

Japan has proposed that we should work towards "three reductions", namely reductions in the number of nuclear weapons,

the role they play, and the incentive to possess them, in addition, “three preventions”, namely, preventions of the emergence of new nuclear weapons states, the proliferation of nuclear-weapons-related materials and technologies, and nuclear terrorism. Japan is determined to make further efforts to accumulate building blocks towards the world without nuclear weapons, while keeping in mind this concept.

Mr. Chairman,

The year 2015 marks the 70th anniversary of the atomic bombings in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. It is crucial that all states more resolutely and urgently fulfill their disarmament commitments and work to ensure nuclear weapons are not used and do not proliferate. Japan believes eliminating nuclear weapons is possible through substantive and constructive engagement with those states which possess nuclear weapons. In this respect, Japan will once again submit to this committee its resolution entitled “United Action Towards the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons”. We strongly hope that our resolution gains as many co-sponsors and supporters as possible.

The year 2015 will coincide with the NPT Review Conference which is expected to agree on a new package of Action Plan that will provide us with a fresh road map toward 2020. Although there are contentious issues ahead, and the prospect of the Conference is not so bright, we should unite our efforts, with a sense of urgency, for the success of the Conference.

Mr. Chairman,

In the 2014 session, it was disappointing that the Conference on Disarmament (CD) was once again not able to reach an agreement on a programme of work. However, we can evaluate

the open and inclusive discussion held during the meetings of the informal working group on the programme of work. A series of structured and substantive discussion on all items on the agenda of the Conference had also taken place under the Schedule of Activities. These discussions contributed to keeping momentum for future negotiation and maintaining the CD's expertise on the core issues. In this context, we expect that the current discussion and an output from the GGE on an FMCT will give further impetus in the CD. Japan appreciates the Canadian leadership in the GGE and will continue to support GGE's efforts for formulating productive reports next spring.

Mr. Chairman,

The DPRK's nuclear and missile development programs, including its work in uranium enrichment, pose serious threats to the peace and stability of the region and the entire international community as well as to the NPT. Japan expresses its strong concern over the DPRK's repeated ballistic missile launches in violation of the relevant Security Council resolutions, its announcement indicating the possibility of further missile launches and a nuclear test and its ongoing activities at Yongbyon including the restart of 5MW graphite moderated reactor and further renovation of the uranium enrichment facility. Japan strongly urges the DPRK to refrain from any further provocative action and to halt all related activities. A nuclear test by the DPRK is totally unacceptable, as it seriously undermines the international non-proliferation regime centered on the NPT, and risks the reversal of our efforts taken in favor of a world free of nuclear weapons. Japan urges the DPRK to comply fully with all its international obligations and commitments, including under the Security Council resolutions and the 2005 Joint Statement of the Six Party Talks. We once more strongly urge the DPRK to completely abandon all its nuclear weapons and missile development programs in a verifiable and irreversible manner

and to return to compliance with its IAEA safeguards agreement and the NPT.

As for the Iranian nuclear issue, Japan, has strongly urged Iran to ratify the IAEA Additional Protocol as well as the CTBT, and to fully cooperate with the IAEA for removal of international concerns regarding its nuclear activities. Japan welcomes the relevant measures taken related to the first-steps under the Joint Plan of Action and hopes that the on-going negotiation of the EU3 plus 3 with Iran will lead to a final and comprehensive resolution of the issue. Japan, while welcoming the relevant steps taken to date, regrets the fact that Iran has not implemented some of the measures that they have agreed to with IAEA as the third step of the framework of cooperation. In this context, Japan fully supports the efforts by IAEA and urges Iran to swiftly and steadily implement measures, such as ones related to Possible Military Dimension.

Mr. Chairman,

With respect to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), it is important to destroy all of the Syrian chemical weapons and production facilities, and prevent further use of chemical weapons in Syria. Japan appreciates the excellent work done by the OPCW, the UN, the United States and other countries on the elimination of Syrian chemical weapons, in which Japan continues to play a constructive role to achieve these tasks.

In addition, Japan has been committed to making the fullest possible efforts to complete the destruction of the abandoned chemical weapons in China and has achieved significant progress.

With regard to the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC), Japan welcomes the valuable discussion during the current inter-sessional process to promote common

understandings and effective actions towards the next review conference in 2016. We will continue our efforts to enhance BTWC implementation with a particular focus on responses to the rapid advances in the life science field as well as dual-use issues.

Mr. Chairman,

Japan welcomes the entry-into-force of the ATT (Arms Trade Treaty), which will take place in December this year. In order to make the ATT function smoothly and effectively, it is essential for States Parties to make necessary decisions at the first Conference of States Parties next year. As a strong supporter of the ATT, Japan will appreciate the Government of Mexico for its leadership in the current preparatory stage and will continue to engage constructively in the preparatory process towards the First Conference of States Parties.

With regard to small arms and light weapons, the consensus adoption of the Outcome Document of the Fifth Biennial Meeting of States shows the collective will of the international community, such as to resolve the issues of stockpile management, matching needs and resources for international assistance on the field. We are confident that putting into action the measures agreed in the outcome document as the “The Way Forward” will make significant contributions in addressing illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.

With regard to the Anti-personnel Mine Ban Convention, it is significant that the outcome documents headed by the Maputo +15 Declaration were adopted by the Third Review Conference in June. This expresses the States Parties’ aspiration to complete time-bound obligations by 2025, including mine clearance. As a long-term advocate of mine action programs, Japan will continue to support those who face a serious challenge removing anti-personnel mines through strengthening regional cooperation,

including South-South cooperation. As the Chair for the Mine Action Support Group (MASG), Japan is also determined to continue to play an active role in advancing mine action.

Finally, Mr. Chairman,

I would like to conclude my statement by stressing that Japan has for a long time advocated in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation education to raise awareness throughout the world, especially, the younger generations regarding the humanitarian consequences of the use of nuclear weapons. Based on our distinct historical background, we always bear in mind the importance to “spread” this awareness across generations and national borders as well as to “deepen” our understanding on their scientific aspects. Since this is a universal issue to every member of this community, we hope that the discussion on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons will not only serve as a driving force of nuclear disarmament but also serve as a bridge, or a catalyst to “unite” the different groups of thought instead of dividing them.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.