

STATEMENT BY TOSHIO SANO  
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TO THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT  
AT THE FIRST COMMITTEE OF THE 69<sup>TH</sup> SESSION  
OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- THEMATIC DEBATE: DISARMAMENT AND NON-PROLIFERATION EDUCATION -  
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Mr. Chairman,

Japan firmly believes that promoting nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation education underpins all efforts for achieving a world free of nuclear weapons.

The Final Document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference underscored education as a useful and effective means for that purpose, and encouraged all States Parties to implement the 34 recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General on “The United Nations Study on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Education.” In this regard, Recommendation 31 of the report requests Member States to inform the UN ODA of steps taken to implement the recommendations. Unfortunately, according to the 6th biennial report of the Secretary-General on Disarmament and Non-proliferation Education (A/69/113), only nine countries, including Japan, submitted the relevant information. This regrettable result should be improved and we need to nurture “a culture of reporting” among ourselves. We encourage all the Member States to put into practice the Secretary-General’s recommendations and report to the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs.

This year Mexico submitted to the General Assembly the biannual resolution on the UN study, which reaffirms the importance of implementing the Secretary-General’s 34 recommendations. As a co-sponsor, Japan hopes that it will again be adopted by consensus.

Mr. Chairman,

To overcome the challenges to disarmament and non-proliferation, the role of civil society and the younger generation is essential.

The “2012 Nagasaki Declaration” which was an outcome of the “Global Forum on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Education” hosted by the Government of Japan stressed that education should be carried out in an inclusive and collaborative way by various stakeholders, through their interactive engagements. On the margin of this First Committee as well as previous NPT PrepComs, many governments and NGOs, including Japan, organized a variety of side-events to increase the awareness on disarmament and non-proliferation. An increase in the number and quality of side-events each year not only focuses their attention on the important issues we face, but also provides useful feedback for us all.

Based on our distinct historical background, we believe that we have a special mission to convey what actually happened in August 1945 to people around the world, particularly future generations. Along with the “Special Communicators for a World without Nuclear Weapons” in 2010, Japan launched a new program called “Youth Communicators for a World without Nuclear Weapons” in 2013. So far a total of 58 Youth Communicators have been appointed and globally dispatched. Under this program, younger generations are expected to share what they have learned about the tragic consequences caused by atomic bombings and their thoughts about possible steps to achieve their elimination.

In addition, every year since 1983, Japan has been contributing to the UN Disarmament Fellowship Program and inviting young diplomats and government officials to Japan. To date, eight hundred and eleven fellows from around the world have visited Hiroshima and Nagasaki. This year, an additional 25 fellows witnessed first-hand realities of the devastation brought by atomic bombings. We are convinced it was an eye-opening experience for the fellows and hope those who once visited these two cities strive for nuclear disarmament in their respective government and organization.

Mr. Chairman,

In 1983, Japan installed a permanent exhibition on the atomic bombings at the

UN in New York and more recently, in 2011 in Geneva. We believe they have contributed considerably to a greater public awareness of the consequences caused by nuclear weapons and also what is being currently done to promote nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Last year, in this committee, I pointed out that few people noticed the existence of the New York exhibition since it was relocated due to reconstruction of the UN building. As it is now understood that reconstruction will be completed next month, we look forward to the allocation of appropriate space for the exhibition and to further improve the quality of the display.

Mr. Chairman,

Our journey towards a secure world free of nuclear weapons requires enduring will and enormous energy from the people on a global scale. Therefore, it is all the more crucial to foster a broad and deep understanding of the importance of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in the minds and hearts of the people. Believing in the potential of education, Japan intends to continue to take the lead in this area and calls on all Member States to join.

Thank you.