

**Statement by H.E. Mr. Masakazu HAMACHI,
Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan
At the Conference on Disarmament
2 March 2016, Geneva, Switzerland**

Mr. President,

At the outset, I would like to congratulate you, Ambassador Kongstad, on your assumption of the Presidency of the Conference on Disarmament (CD). I assure you the full support and cooperation of my delegation throughout your tenure. I also would like to express my gratitude to Secretary General, Mr. Møller, and his team for their continuous support of the work of the Conference.

It is well known that Japan, as the only country to have ever suffered the atomic bombings, has placed nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation as one of the central pillars of its foreign policy. Japan has made its best efforts in taking a leading role towards the realization of a world free of nuclear weapons, including through revitalizing this important forum, the Conference on Disarmament (CD).

Japan commends the Presidents' tireless efforts towards the adoption of a Programme of Work during this year's session. Considering that the mandate given to the CD is not a "discussion" but a "negotiation" of a disarmament treaty, the work of the CD should lead to the early commencement of a negotiation of a disarmament treaty. This year, the Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) in Geneva has promoted our discussions in the CD. It is a wake-up call from the international community that the CD should end its two-decade stalemate and fulfill its mandate by adopting a meaningful Programme of Work. Japan spares no effort on this.

Mr. President,

Looking back on the recent situation of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, active discussions on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons and effective measures on nuclear disarmament were held at the 2015 NPT Review Conference and UN General Assembly First Committee last year.

However, the Review Conference was not able to adopt a final

document. The UN General Assembly resolutions related to the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons as well as establishing the Open-Ended Working Group were adopted but with dissenting votes from a group of countries. It is Japan's concern that, as a result of these discussions, the rift between the nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States seems to have widened.

Japan has consistently stated that to promote nuclear disarmament, practical and concrete measures with the cooperation between nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States are necessary. Japan ascribes importance to the following measures, among others, as practical and concrete measures:

- ✧ enhanced transparency of nuclear forces,
- ✧ deeper reduction of all types of nuclear weapons by all States that possess nuclear weapons and eventual multilateralization of nuclear weapons reduction negotiations,
- ✧ early entry into force of the CTBT,
- ✧ early commencement and conclusion of negotiations on an FMCT, and
- ✧ promotion of the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification (IPNDV).

With regard to the CTBT, last September, Japan, together with Kazakhstan served as Co-President of the Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Treaty. Furthermore, Japan hosted a Group of Eminent Persons meeting in Hiroshima last August. Japan will continue to strongly call for the early ratification of the CTBT by all Annex II States, and to work to facilitate the CTBT's early entry into force.

Furthermore, among the four core issues of the CD, the early commencement of negotiations on an FMCT is vital as one of the important building blocks towards the realization of a world free of nuclear weapons. Any issue, including existing stocks, should be dealt with within the process of negotiations.

These concrete and practical measures are included in the UN General Assembly Resolution, entitled "United action with renewed determination towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons", which was presented by Japan and was adopted with the support of

a large majority of the 166 UN Member States.

Mr. President,

It is of our view that nuclear disarmament must be promoted based on two understandings, a clear understanding of the humanitarian impacts of the use of nuclear weapons and the objective assessment of the reality of the security situation.

Japan, more than any other country, fully and directly understands the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons. In this regard, Japan has long been working very hard to spread the awareness of the reality of the devastation that occurred in Hiroshima and Nagasaki across national borders and generations and to deepen its understanding. Awareness of the catastrophic humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons fundamentally underpins all nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation efforts.

In terms of security, despite the repeated calls by the international community, the DPRK conducted the fourth nuclear test in January and launched a ballistic missile in February. The series of provocations in a short-range of time seriously undermines the peace and security of Northeast Asia, as well as the international community. They are serious violations of relevant UN Security Council Resolutions (UNSCRs) and the Japan-DPRK Pyongyang Declaration as well as the Joint Statement of the Six-Party Talks of September 2005. Furthermore, they represent a serious challenge to the international disarmament and non-proliferation regime based on the NPT. Thus, Japan lodges a serious protest against the DPRK, and strongly condemns its nuclear test and missile launch. Japan reiterates its strong demand for the DPRK to immediately and fully implement relevant UNSCRs and other commitments. Such a severe security environment must always be taken into consideration in promoting nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

Mr. President,

As a basis for promoting above mentioned concrete and practical nuclear disarmament measures based on two understandings, it is imperative to maintain and strengthen the NPT

regime. Despite the result of the 2015 NPT Review Conference, the NPT remains to be the cornerstone of the international nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. In order to strengthen the NPT regime, it is vital to achieve a meaningful outcome at the 2020 NPT Review Conference. Seizing every opportunity, Japan will make the utmost efforts to this end through the 2020 NPT review process starting from next year. Japan will, as a member of the Non-proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI), continue to strengthen cooperation with other States and groups of States.

This year Japan holds the presidency of the G7, and will host the Foreign Minister's Meeting in Hiroshima in April and Summit Meeting in Ise-Shima in May. Japan serves as Co-Coordinator of Facilitating the Entry into Force of the CTBT until next year. Making best use of these opportunities, Japan will work to make progress towards the realization of a world free of nuclear weapons.

Mr. President,

The widening difference of views negatively affects international discourse on nuclear disarmament. The CD is no exception. The longer the stalemate of the CD continues, the more its *raison d'être* will be questioned.

Japan urges the CD to achieve a meaningful decision on a Programme of Work that will lead to early commencement of negotiations.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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