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Parties to the Treaty on Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)
- Cluster III Specific Issue-
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Mr. Chairman,

As the issue of withdrawal from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) is one of the most critical and urgent problems facing the NPT regime, and a matter of great importance to Japan, I first would like to touch upon Japan's view on the withdrawal provision of the NPT.

(Withdrawal provision of the NPT)

Article X of the NPT provides the right of a State Party to withdraw from the Treaty. However, if a State Party withdraws from the Treaty after having secretly acquired the ability to manufacture nuclear weapons, it would pose a threat to regional and international security. This would have an enormous impact on the credibility and integrity of the international nuclear non-proliferation regime based on the NPT and supported by a universal adherence to it.

The integrity and universality of the Treaty must be maintained for international peace and security. It is therefore important to give States Parties the incentive to remain under the Treaty. To this end, tangible progress needs to be made in the implementation of the measures adopted in the past NPT review process, including the 2010 action plan which deals with nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Withdrawal from the NPT is an extremely serious matter since this would undermine the value and integrity of the Treaty as an instrument for international security. It would have disastrous impact on the security of all. The State parties should give significant attention to this issue.

On that basis, the withdrawal procedure in the NPT needs to be clarified in a manner consistent with the provisions of the Treaty. It is also necessary to clarify how the international community should deal with a notice of withdrawal. In the last NPT review process, the NPTD presented a working paper containing the following points:

First, the right to withdrawal can be exercised only in the face of extraordinary events, and the withdrawing State Party shall give a notice of such withdrawal to all other Parties in the Treaty and to the Security Council with a detailed and specific explanation.

Second, a withdrawing State Party continues to be responsible for violations of the Treaty

Third, Depositories and other States Parties shall exert every diplomatic effort to persuade the withdrawing State to reconsider its decision, bearing in mind the significance of the universality and the integrity of the Treaty.
Lastly, nuclear materials, equipment and technology acquired by a State under Article 4

of the NPT prior to withdrawal shall remain under IAEA safeguards even after withdrawal.

Taking into account the aforementioned points, Japan would like to stress the importance of addressing this issue in the course of this review process.

(Strengthening the NPT review process)

Mr. Chairman,

Also, I now would like to touch upon the issue of strengthening the NPT review process.

The objective of the review process of the Non-Proliferation Treaty is to review the implementation by both nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States of all provisions of the NPT. While transparency and accountability in the implementation of non-proliferation obligations by non-nuclear-weapon States are ensured through reports to the IAEA based on the IAEA safeguards, there exists no specific transparency mechanism for nuclear disarmament obligations of nuclear-weapon States.

Since the NPT recognizes only five States as possessing nuclear weapons, the review process was designed to mitigate such nature through promoting transparency and accountability by nuclear-weapon States. Its primary objective should remain to review the implementation by the nuclear-weapon States of their nuclear disarmament obligations.

In addition, since the Non-Proliferation Treaty was extended indefinitely in 1995, the responsibility of accountability by nuclear-weapon States has increasingly become important. We also need to note that the decision to indefinitely extend the treaty was adopted as a package with a decision to strengthen the review process of the treaty.

On the basis of this understanding, Japan is of the view that the strengthening of the review process should be achieved by enhancing accountability. In the context of disarmament, transparency measures play the crucial role of an accountability mechanism. One effective measure of transparency is reporting. It is therefore extremely important that the transparency be enhanced and reporting be formalized or institutionalized as a concrete measure to ensure the accountability. We believe that the review process of the NPT will be strengthened through these efforts.

In accordance with this line of thinking, Japan, together with the members of the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPD), has been elaborating a standard reporting form. The NPD has also submitted to this session of the Preparatory Committee a joint working paper entitled "Transparency by all States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons", which encourages all States parties, both nuclear- and non-nuclear weapon States, to make use of this reporting template throughout the 2020 Treaty review cycle, with a view to increasing the quality, quantity and consistency of transparency by all States parties.

While the submission of reports by nuclear-weapon States in 2014 and 2015 marked important initial steps, these reports were based on "a common framework." It is not clear whether the nuclear-weapon States have actually reached an agreement on a "standard reporting form" in accordance with the 2010 action plan. Moreover, these reports were not conducive for measuring the performance of nuclear-weapon States.

Nor is it easy to gauge progress through future reporting process.

For the sake of ensuring accountability and strengthening the NPT review process, my delegation strongly encourages the nuclear-weapon States to agree on a standard reporting form, and continuously work to improve the quantity and quality of the information provided.

Japan reiterates the importance of transparency and reporting not only in the context of nuclear disarmament but also in that of strengthening the review process.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

