

**STATEMENT BY H.E. MR. MANABU HORII,
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2018 High Level Segment of the Conference on Disarmament

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Madam President,

At the outset, I would like to congratulate you, H.E. Ms. Veronika Bard, Ambassador of the Permanent Mission of Sweden to the United Nations in Geneva, on your assumption of the Presidency of the Conference on Disarmament (CD). I assure you the full support and cooperation of my delegation. I would also like to express my gratitude to Mr. Michael Møller, the Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations, and his team for their support for the work of the Conference.

Madam President,

The international community faces rising tension in the security environment. In the past two years, North Korea forcefully conducted three nuclear tests and launched as many as 40 ballistic missiles. This poses an unprecedented, grave and imminent threat to the entire international community, which is totally unacceptable. We should not be blinded by North Korea's "charm offensive," and it is essential for the international community to continue increasing pressure on North Korea to the maximum level towards the goal of the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula.

The understanding of the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of the use of nuclear weapons is widely spreading among the international community. In this regard, I would like to renew my respect to the efforts taken by the Hibakusha (the Atomic Bomb survivors) of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, as well as the Youth Communicators for a World Free of Nuclear Weapons who have conveyed to the world the reality of the atomic bombings. Japan has also contributed to enhancing the understanding of the reality of the atomic bombings through inviting leaders from all over the world and accepting the participants of the United Nations Programme of Fellowships on Disarmament to Hiroshima and Nagasaki every year.

As H.E. Mr. Antonio Guterres, the Secretary General of the United Nations, touched upon in his speech yesterday, we should not forget the fact that human lives are being taken by conventional weapons. As it was pointed out, the illicit trade of conventional weapons could have been a financial source for a nuclear development program. Aiming to eradicate the illicit trade of Small Arms and Light Weapons, Japan has submitted a series of resolutions since 1995. Serving as the President of the Fourth Conference of State Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), Japan submitted a resolution calling for the universalization of the ATT and decided to provide approximately three million U.S. dollars for the ATT Voluntary Trust Fund.

Madam President,

Towards the realization of “a world free of nuclear weapons,” we should advance nuclear disarmament efforts with the participation, both from nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon States, taking into account real security threats. Japan will continuously call for the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and its universalization, while calling for sustaining the moratorium on nuclear tests explosions. With respect to the Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty (FMCT), we hope that the discussion at the High Level FMCT Expert Preparatory Group will provide an impetus to break the stagnation at the Conference on Disarmament (CD) and will pave a way to the commencement of a FMCT negotiation in the CD. Moreover, increasing transparency of nuclear arsenals is important since verification of irreversible nuclear disarmament requires transparency.

Madam President,

As the cornerstone of global disarmament and non-proliferation, the NPT regime contributes to the improvement of the international security environment. In this regard, all NPT Member States should fulfill their responsibilities. The Member States, including nuclear weapon States, need to fulfill their obligations under Article 6, while cooperating towards non-proliferation. Furthermore, as North Korea’s nuclear and missile program poses a great challenge to the NPT regime, it is imperative to issue a clear message that we will not accept a nuclear-armed North Korea. These efforts are all important towards the realization of “a world free of nuclear weapons.”

To jointly advance nuclear disarmament with various countries, Japan will promote cooperation such as the Non-proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI). In addition, Japan launched the “Group of Eminent Persons,” which held its first meeting last November. The recommendations from the Group, which is to achieve substantive advancement of nuclear disarmament based on rebuilding trust among countries with different approaches, will provide input to the second Preparatory Committee of the 2020 NPT Review Conference this Spring.

Madam President,

To advance nuclear disarmament, breaking through the stagnation of the Conference on Disarmament is also essential. The CD is the only forum where both non-nuclear weapon States and nuclear weapon States can collaborate to advance nuclear disarmament negotiations. In this regard, Japan welcomes the recent adoption of the draft decision on the establishment of the five Subsidiary Bodies under the Sri Lankan Presidency. Japan hopes that the substantive discussions and deliberations in the Subsidiary Body will lead to the adoption of a Program of Work (POW). Japan will spare no effort to this end.

What do we need in order for the work of the Subsidiary Bodies to be more substantive? Here let me propose three important key words, namely – a more Focused Agenda, a more Formal Approach, and a more Flexible Attitude.

First, in order for us to discuss substantively, we should establish a more focused agenda, which reflects the level of maturity of the CD agenda in an appropriate way, aiming to conduct technical discussions.

Second, regarding the structure of the Subsidiary Bodies, we need a more formal approach. In other words, we should seek a way to have our meetings kept on record, to present progress from one meeting to the next, and to obtain substantial results.

Third, let me suggest that this year all CD Member States should maintain a more flexible attitude in order to make comprehensive decisions and to show a spirit of compromise with determination. This will pave a way to overcome the crisis and to break the dead lock of the CD.

It is also important to earnestly discuss a way for revitalizing the CD, as the UN Secretary General also touched upon. It goes without saying that the CD mechanism should be adjusted according to the current needs of the challenges we are facing.

Madam President,

As the only country to have ever suffered atomic bombings during war, let me conclude my remarks by pledging that Japan will commit its utmost efforts, in cooperation with this year's CD Presidents, the Secretariat, and all CD Members towards the realization of "a world free of nuclear weapons."

Thank you for your attention.

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