

**Statement by Mr. Taro Kono,
Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan,
at the United Nations Security Council Meeting
on DPRK Denuclearization**

(27 September 2018, New York)

Thank you, Mr. President,

I would first like to extend my sincere gratitude to Secretary Pompeo, for your tireless efforts on North Korean issues. You have not only brought this meeting together to reaffirm our collective determination to tackle these pressing issues but you have also been selflessly dedicated to achieving the complete denuclearization of North Korea for the good of us all. I would also like to pay tribute to my counterpart from the Republic of Korea, Minister Kang, for her leadership and hard-work.

Japan welcomes and supports the ongoing diplomatic efforts, including the historic US-North Korea Summit in Singapore in June as well as three Inter-Korean Summits this year, as a step towards the comprehensive resolution of the outstanding issues regarding North Korea.

It is my greatest hope that these efforts will lead to the complete, verifiable and irreversible dismantlement (CVID) of all weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles of all ranges by North Korea, which is a common goal that we all share under the relevant Security Council resolutions. Japan will spare no effort to realize this goal.

Nevertheless, we are acutely aware that the IAEA's most recent report expressed "grave concern" that North Korea continues its nuclear program.

What we seek is for North Korea to seize this unprecedented opportunity and take decisive and irreversible steps towards CVID.

The international community should come together to assist the diplomatic efforts that are underway, and encourage North Korea to make a strategic decision to fulfill its international obligations and commitments. In doing so, it is critical for us to remain united to ensure full implementation of the resolutions that this Council has unanimously adopted. I am convinced that there is no better way for us to support the current diplomatic process.

We should also be aware of some important incidents. The Government of Japan shares the view of the U.S. Government and some other partner countries that the 2018 annual cap for petroleum products has already been breached. It is important that all Member States immediately stop supplying these products to North Korea under the Security Council resolutions. There are also continued reports of increasingly sophisticated efforts to evade and circumvent measures based on the Security Council resolutions, including through so-called "ship to ship" transfers and the selling of fishing rights. The very authority of the decisions made by this Council is at stake. It is our obligation to stop sanction evasion activities.

Last but not least, between Japan and North Korea lie the issues that must be resolved immediately. Japan is determined to directly engage with North Korea and use every possible means at our disposal towards the immediate resolution of the issues.

North Korea is blessed with great potential and is well-placed to shape a brighter future for itself if it takes the right path. North Korea enjoys an abundance of resources and a hardworking labor force. This is an important moment, and I strongly urge North Korea to seize this unique opportunity. It is only North Korea that can make this happen.

In order to achieve lasting peace and stability in Northeast Asia and beyond while protecting the current international non-proliferation regime, it is absolutely imperative to realize the complete, verifiable and irreversible dismantlement of all weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles of all ranges by North Korea. To this end, let us unite in renewing our clear and unwavering commitment to the full implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions.

Thank you very much.