

STATEMENT BY JAPAN
AT THE FIRST COMMITTEE OF THE 76th SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- THEMATIC DEBATE: OTHER DISARMAMENT MEASURES AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY -
OCTOBER, 2021 NEW YORK

Firstly, the security environment surrounding Japan is becoming more severe, with more uncertainty facing the existing order than Japan has enjoyed up until now. Cyberspace has become a realm of competition that reflects geopolitical tensions, regardless of the situation. The state of cyberspace can no longer be simply distinguished between peacetime and wartime, as there are increasing numbers of alleged cases of cyberattacks by military units with advanced cyber capabilities targeting the critical infrastructure of other countries. As greater segments of society become increasingly digitalized, cyberattacks pose a risk of rapidly developing into an increasingly grave situation. Influence operations carried out using cyberspace and cyberattacks, which are difficult to attribute and whose incurred damages are hard to assess, can, at times, be conducted in combination with military operations and used in an attempt to change the status quo without engaging in armed attacks. The nature of cyberspace is asymmetrical and there is an overwhelming advantage for the attackers. In order to ensure security in cyberspace, it is essential to strengthen our capabilities to deter and respond to cyberattacks seamlessly between peacetime and contingency situations.

In order to deter malicious cyber activities and protect people's safety and rights, Japan will continue to have close coordination with its ally and like-minded countries on a continuous basis, and will take resolute responses against cyber threats, including those possibly sponsored by states, utilizing political, economic, technological, legal, diplomatic, and all other viable and effective means and capabilities.

To ensure "a free, fair and secure cyberspace" on a global scale, Japan will promote its basic principles in the international arena. Japan will also continue to play an active role to advance the rule of law in cyberspace and establish international rules in line with Japan's basic principles and in collaboration with its ally and like-minded countries. In addition to employing capabilities to disrupt an opponent's use of cyberspace for an attack against Japan, Japan will take due steps including the use of diplomatic means and criminal prosecution. As an example of diplomatic means, in July 2021, Japan issued a

statement that firmly condemned cyberattacks conducted by a cyberattack group which the Chinese government is very likely behind, condemned cyberattacks involved a cyberattack group which the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) was very likely behind, and indicated that Japan will take strict measures against these activities.

Japan welcomes the sixth GGE report and the OEWG report, both adopted by consensus.

The greatest value of the OEWG report was that it was adopted by consensus in a process where all UN Members participated fully. The UN Members affirmed the *acquis* directly, including that international law, particularly the UN Charter in its entirety, is applicable in cyberspace.

The GGE report has additional value. For each of the 11 norms included in the 2015 GGE report, the new report provides guidance and examples of implementation. Japan hopes that this content will further promote cooperation between States in advancing responsible State behaviour. In addition, it is clearer now that internationally wrongful acts attributable to a State entail State responsibility. The applicability of international humanitarian law is expressed in a clear manner. The Group noted again the inherent right of States to take measures recognized in the Charter.

Especially, for the stabilization of cyberspace, it is essential that international law and norms work together to prevent internationally wrongful acts using ICTs and to promote responsible State behavior in cyberspace.

Japan is committed to safeguarding a free, fair and secure cyberspace and will continue to actively contribute to discussions and efforts to promote rule of law in cyberspace, including at the United Nations.

Second, just as education always gives us power to take steps forward, disarmament and non-proliferation education plays a fundamental role in fostering understanding on nuclear weapons and their humanitarian consequences.

Even though we are currently facing the severe and unstable international security environment, the importance of raising awareness of the realities of the use of nuclear weapons is not diminished. On the contrary, education has been assuming more importance under the current circumstances, with the divergence of views among states

becoming even greater. In this context, Japan strongly believes in the power of education to break the current stalemate and help us move forward in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

Against this backdrop, Japan has actively engaged in various efforts to pass on the experiences of Hiroshima and Nagasaki to future generations, putting particular importance on the engagement of younger generations. For instance, Japan has contributed to the United Nations Disarmament Fellowship Programme since 1983, by inviting young diplomats to Japan and providing them with opportunities to gain insight into the realities of the consequences of atomic bombings. In addition, Japan supports civil society's efforts through designation of "Special Communicators" and "Youth Communicators for a World without Nuclear Weapons," which have facilitated civil society involvement in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation with more than 750 designated delegates to date.

Furthermore, as Japan's draft resolution on nuclear disarmament to the First Committee this year demonstrates, Japan encourages all States to facilitate efforts on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation education, and to raise awareness of the realities of the use of nuclear weapons. In addition, Japan welcomes the report of the Secretary-General on disarmament and non-proliferation education.

Japan firmly believes in the power of disarmament and non-proliferation education and the potential for future generations to achieve our common goal, the realization of "a world without nuclear weapons." Japan has been and will continue to take the lead on this issue and encourages all Member States to join our efforts.

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