

**Statement by TAKAICHI Sanae,
Minister of State for Science and Technology Policy, Japan
at the 66th IAEA General Conference
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President,
Director General,
Distinguished guests,

Japan highly commends the Agency's work in promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and non-proliferation. Japan is committed to contributing to global peace and prosperity and supports the leadership of Director General Grossi.

NPT Review Conference

At the Tenth NPT Review Conference last month, Kishida Fumio, Prime Minister of Japan, announced the "Hiroshima Action Plan" for a world without nuclear weapons and reiterated Japan's commitment to nuclear non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

It is deeply regrettable that the draft outcome document was not adopted by consensus due to the sole opposition by Russia. However, Japan will continue to work with the Agency to maintain and strengthen the international non-proliferation regime and to facilitate the benefits of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy underpinned by the NPT.

Nuclear facilities in Ukraine

Japan is gravely concerned about the situation of nuclear facilities in Ukraine. Russia's military activities near or at nuclear power plants and other facilities in Ukraine, let alone Russia's unjustifiable and unprovoked aggression against Ukraine, cannot be tolerated. Japan condemns Russia's actions in the strongest terms.

Japan commends and supports the continuous efforts of the Agency to secure nuclear safety and security in Ukraine based on the seven indispensable pillars of nuclear safety and security, which includes the Agency's assistance

to Ukraine and its mission to the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant. In this regard, Japan pledged 2 million euros to support the Agency's efforts. Japan underlines the need to restore, without delay, the safety and security of Ukraine's nuclear facilities and materials.

***Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy (Japan's support to the IAEA, Medical)
(Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy)***

The peaceful uses of nuclear energy play an important role for prosperity. Unlocking the immense potential of nuclear energy enables us to address a wide array of global challenges such as climate change and energy security, and the implementation of the SDGs. This year, Japan has contributed one million euros through the Peaceful Uses Initiative (PUI) to "Rays of Hope", launched by the Director General this February. Japan places top priority on safety, taking into account the lessons learned from TEPCO's Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station Accident, and will continue to work together with the Agency to ensure the peaceful uses of nuclear energy in a sustainable manner.

(50th Anniversary of RCA)

Japan celebrates the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology for Asia and the Pacific (RCA). Over the last fifty years, cooperation among Member States of the RCA has promoted the peaceful uses of nuclear science and technology, thereby bringing socio-economic benefits to peoples in the Asia-Pacific region. For its part, Japan, as an active member of the RCA, has committed itself both in finance and personnel to RCA activities since its participation in 1978. Japan will continue to work together with other members to further advance cooperation at RCA projects.

(Medical)

I am pleased to announce that Okayama University will be designated as an IAEA Collaborating Centre in the field of Boron Neutron Capture Therapy today following the designation of QST, HICARE and JAEA. Japan continues to contribute to support the Agency and Member States in various fields.

Japan has also formulated the Action Plan to provide nuclear medicine treatment using domestically produced radioisotopes to patients. Through the stable supply of Mo-99/Tc -99m, strengthening of research and development for the mass production of Ac-225 and enhancement of efforts toward the practical use of At-211, Japan aims to enhance the medical system with cutting edge nuclear science technology as well as to improve people's welfare.

Decommissioning of TEPCO's Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station and Handling of ALPS Treated Water

Japan has been steadily advancing the decommissioning of TEPCO's Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station and environmental restoration activities off site, with the cooperation of the Agency, which has a unique mandate and expertise. Since 2011, Japan has received two decontamination missions and five decommissioning missions to obtain the technical advice from the Agency, of which the results are regularly published by the Agency. Regarding the handling of the ALPS treated water, the Agency, with the involvement of international experts, has been conducting reviews on the safety and regulatory aspects of the ALPS treated water and monitoring. In April and in June, the reports on the review of these two aspects were published by the IAEA.

In May, DG Grossi visited TEPCO's Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station during his stay in Japan, and noted the "remarkable progress on decommissioning of the NPS" since his last visit two years ago. He also said, "we the IAEA will be able to ascertain that once discharge of processed water goes into the Pacific Ocean, it will be done in full conformity with the international standards and therefore it will not cause any harm to the environment."

Japan highly appreciates the professional work of the Agency, which has been carried out in an independent, objective and transparent manner. In close cooperation with the international community including the Agency, Japan will continue to advance its efforts in a transparent and scientific manner in accordance with domestic and international safety standards.

Nuclear Safety

Japan places great importance on close cooperation with the international community in the field of nuclear safety.

Japan has been participating in the IAEA Safety Standards Committees as a committee member and will continue to make efforts to improve nuclear regulations by sharing experiences and knowledge concerning nuclear and radiation safety in Japan. Japan also contributed to the safe management of spent fuel and radioactive waste by participating in the review process of the 7th Review Meeting of the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management. Japan will continue contributing to enhancing nuclear safety through the review process of the 8th and 9th Joint Review Meetings of the Convention on Nuclear Safety.

Japan has also been supporting the activities of the IAEA Response and Assistance Network (RANET) Capacity Building Centre (CBC) in Fukushima and contributing to enhancing nuclear safety worldwide based on the experience and lessons learned from the accident at TEPCO's Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station. Japan also continues to assist with the development of infrastructure and human resources in countries introducing nuclear power plants.

Nuclear Security

Nuclear Security is one of the most important issues that the international community should address. Japan is proactively working to minimize stocks of nuclear materials which could potentially pose a threat to the international community, such as the removal of Highly Enriched Uranium (HEU) fuel from the research reactor "Yayoi" at the University of Tokyo and Kyoto University Critical Assembly (KUCA). Following these actions, Japan decided to remove HEU fuel from the Kindai University Reactor (UTR-KINKI), which is the last research reactor possessing HEU in Japan, and convert it to a LEU use reactor in this September.

Japan will continue to contribute strengthening international nuclear security,

in cooperation with IAEA, through activities for regional human resource development, including more effective trainings by the Japan Atomic Energy Agency (JAEA)'s Integrated Support Center for Nuclear Nonproliferation and Nuclear Security (ISCN), based on the experiences under the COVID-19 pandemic.

Last October JAEA was designated as an IAEA Collaborating Centre in the fields of nuclear security and of decommissioning and radioactive waste management. Following that, Japan enhances further its efforts to contribute to IAEA and Member States in both areas.

As a single nation cannot ensure global nuclear security, Japan stresses the important role of legal frameworks such as the Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (A/CPPNM) and the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism (ICSANT). . Japan welcomes the fact that first review conference of the A/CPPNM was held in March this year and the outcome document was adopted. Japan continues to make efforts to promote the universalization of these conventions.

Non-Proliferation (including North Korea and Iran)

IAEA safeguards are the fundamental instrument for ensuring global nuclear non-proliferation. Japan strongly supports the Agency's efforts to make them more effective and efficient. Japan also strongly supports the universalization of the CSA and AP. As part of that, Japan undertakes various efforts including activities in the framework of the AP Friends and support for the safeguards workshop organized in the Lao People's Democratic Republic last June. The international community should continue to work together to resolve regional non-proliferation issues.

North Korea's Nuclear Issue

First and foremost, North Korea's nuclear and missile programs pose a serious challenge to the international non-proliferation regime and are totally unacceptable. Japan has been paying close attention to North Korea's nuclear development with grave concern, including issues pointed out this month by the IAEA Director General's Report about the Application of Safeguards in

North Korea. In addition, Japan strongly condemns North Korea's unprecedented series of ballistic missile launches, including the Intercontinental Ballistic Missile launches, in violation of relevant United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions. North Korea's recent nuclear and missile activities pose a threat to peace and security of Japan, the region and the international community.

The international community needs to come together towards the complete denuclearization of North Korea. Japan strongly urges North Korea to take concrete steps towards the complete, verifiable and irreversible dismantlement of all weapons of mass destruction, ballistic missiles of all ranges and related programs. In this regard, I wish to emphasize the critical importance for all States to fully implement relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions, and to note that a robust verification is indispensable in achieving the denuclearization of North Korea, where the Agency should play an important role. Japan highly appreciates the Secretariat's work to enhance the Agency's ability and readiness to verify North Korea's nuclear programme.

Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action

With regard to Iran's nuclear-related activities, Japan supports the JCPOA to uphold the international non-proliferation regime and contribute to the stability of the Middle East. Japan welcomes diplomatic efforts towards achieving the return to compliance with the JCPOA by all relevant countries, and will proactively contribute towards facilitating dialogue.

Japan is concerned that there has been no progress on the issues of the implementation of Iran's Safeguards Agreement. Japan urges Iran to fully cooperate with the Agency and to clarify and resolve the outstanding issues without further delay.

Gender Parity

Gender parity expands the horizon in the field of peaceful uses of nuclear energy and non-proliferation. Japan has been a proud contributor to the IAEA Marie Curie Fellowship initiative since its launch and expressed its intention to pledge an additional one million euro for the initiative this year. Japan welcomes the continued efforts by the Agency to achieve gender parity.

Japan's Nuclear Energy Policy

The Japan Atomic Energy Commission has formulated the “Basic Policy for Nuclear Energy”, which serves as a compass for the government’s long-term direction regarding the use of nuclear energy. The discussion is currently underway to revise this basic policy from a wide viewpoint, taking into account the recent changes in the environment surrounding nuclear energy.

Considering the lessons learned from TEPCO’s Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station Accident, Japan places top priority on safety, in utilizing nuclear energy.

Based on this policy, ten nuclear reactors have been restarted to date after the accident at TEPCO’s Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station. Looking toward 2030, Japan continues to proceed with the restart of nuclear power plants while giving top priority to safety, in order to achieve a nuclear power ratio of 20% to 22%, as shown in the previous energy mix.

Japan has set up the GX (Green Transformation) Implementation Council to consider necessary measures to achieve GX aiming for emission reduction by shifting to a clean energy oriented economy and society as well as industrial structures which promote economic growth and development. It is important to secure all possible options in order to ensure a stable supply of energy. Japan will proceed with further discussions on gathering the collective efforts and knowledge of all involved actors toward the restart of nuclear reactors, extension of the operating period and, developing and constructing next-generation innovative reactors.

Research and Development

Japan will steadily advance research and development on fast reactors based on the Strategic Roadmap, in cooperation with France and the United States. With regard to high temperature gas-cooled reactors, Japan promotes the establishment of an underlying technology for hydrogen production by using our test reactor HTTR which has been re-operated since July last year. As for small modular reactors, in cooperation with overseas demonstration projects aiming to start operation at the end of the 2020s, Japanese companies are

making efforts to participate in these projects with high design and manufacturing capabilities.

As fusion energy is recognized as a symbol of international cooperation, Japan emphasizes the importance of fusion research and development including the ITER Project and the Broader Approach activities as well as a variety of academic research. The assembly of ITER has been making steady progress since the work started in July 2020. In addition, Japan set up an expert panel to promote the development of nuclear fusion, where the experts consider the steps for research development and fostering of industries, and plans to present its strategy around next spring.

Plutonium Management

Japan will maintain adherence to the principle of not possessing plutonium without specific purposes. Based on this principle, Japan Atomic Energy Commission (JAEC) revised ‘The Guideline for Plutonium Management in Japan’ in 2018, which announced a policy of reducing the amount of its plutonium stockpile.

As the Agency has concluded that all nuclear material in Japan, including plutonium, remained in peaceful activities under stringent IAEA safeguards, there are no issues in relation to non-proliferation.

Japan is committed to fulfilling its responsibilities in nuclear non-proliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy. To this end, Japan will steadily carry out plutonium thermal power generation, increase transparency in the use and management of its plutonium, and accept stringent IAEA safeguards.

Final Disposal of Radioactive Waste and Decommissioning

Japan will strengthen international collaboration concerning final disposal of radioactive waste, which is a common issue for all countries using nuclear energy.

Considering the discussion among major countries using nuclear energy and the Agency at the international roundtables for final disposal of radioactive

waste, we will continue to further promote international cooperation including workshops on research cooperation and following up on each country's progress.

In April last year, Japan received the IAEA's review of the decommissioning of JAEA's nuclear facilities (ARTEMIS mission). Through the intensive discussion with experts, Japan received comprehensive and professional recommendations and suggestions on how to improve decommissioning in the future.

Convention on Supplementary Compensation for Nuclear Damage

In promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, the establishment of an international compensation framework for nuclear damage is an important issue. Japan hopes to see an early conclusion of the Convention on Supplementary Compensation for Nuclear Damage (CSC) by non-signatory countries.

Conclusion

In closing, on behalf of my government, I would like to reiterate Japan's firm determination to continue to provide its maximum support for the Agency, including the effective use of extrabudgetary contributions such as the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Fund and the Peaceful Uses Initiative, as well as human resources contribution.

Thank you for your kind attention.