



DELEGATION OF JAPAN
TO THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

Statement by ICHIKAWA Tomiko
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At the First Committee of the 79th Session of the General Assembly
--General Debate--
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Madam Chair,

Let me start with congratulating you, Ambassador Maritza Chan Valverde, on your assumption as the Chairperson of this session of the First Committee. I assure you and the bureau of my Delegation's full support and cooperation.

Madam Chair,

The world stands at a historical inflection point. Russia's aggression against Ukraine poses a blatant challenge to the international order based on the rule of law and shakes its very foundations. Japan is also seriously concerned about the rising tensions in the Middle East region. The path towards a world without nuclear weapons is becoming more challenging due to deepening divisions within the international community and the illegal, unprovoked aggression by the Russian Federation against Ukraine, including through threats of use of nuclear weapons. We are concerned that the decreasing trend of the global nuclear stockpile could be reversed for the first time since the end of the Cold War by a rapid expansion of nuclear arsenals, including that of China for which there is a lack of sufficient transparency. Such a situation threatens to spark a new arms race.

Japan is seriously concerned about the advancement of DPRK's nuclear and missile activities and its military cooperation with Russia. It is essential for the international community to be united and fully implement the relevant UN Security Council resolutions, to achieve the complete, verifiable, and irreversible dismantlement (CVID) of DPRK's all weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles of all ranges. Japan urges North Korea to abide by all the relevant UN Security Council resolutions and fully comply with the NPT and IAEA safeguards.

In these difficult times, we should unite the international community and deepen solidarity. Next year marks the 80th year since the atomic bombings on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Japan has assigned itself the mission of taking the lead in international efforts to achieve

a “world without nuclear weapons.” The tragedy of Hiroshima and Nagasaki must never be repeated. It is significant that this year’s Nobel Peace Prize is awarded to Nihon Hidankyo, Japan’s nation-wide grassroots movement of the Hibakusha, for their efforts towards our shared goal. In this regard, maintaining and strengthening the NPT is in the interest of the entire international community. This year again, Japan will submit a draft resolution titled “Steps to building a common roadmap towards a world without nuclear weapons” to present a common approach on nuclear disarmament. We hope that it will garner the widest possible support from Member States.

We must also breathe new life into long-stalled discussions on a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty. Japan will continue working with Member States to maintain and enhance political attention for an FMCT. In addition, the nuclear-weapon States must enhance transparency surrounding nuclear arsenals, including through providing numerical information, as the foundation of all nuclear disarmament measures.

Madam Chair,

Any use of biological or chemical weapons is unacceptable under any circumstances. In this light, Japan supports the activities of the Working Group on strengthening the BWC, and the OPCW's efforts in addressing concerns over the use of chemical weapons in recent years.

Outer space must remain a domain free of any kinds of weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons. Japan is working with the United States to submit a draft resolution on “Weapons of Mass Destruction in Outer Space” to affirm the obligations of all States Parties to fully comply with the Outer Space Treaty. Japan also strongly supports the continuation of discussions on reducing space threats through norms, rules, and principles of responsible behavior.

Madam Chair,

Japan welcomes the successful conclusion of the Fourth Review Conference of the UN Programme of Action on small arms and light weapons this June. Together with Colombia and South Africa, Japan will submit a draft resolution on "the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects" once again this year. Japan strongly hopes that, by adopting this resolution by consensus, we will be able to reaffirm our collective commitment to address this issue.

Japan remains a staunch supporter of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, and its core objective to reduce the humanitarian suffering caused by their use, and calls on all States Parties to renew their commitment to the Convention. Japan will employ its utmost efforts for the success of the Fifth Review Conference in Cambodia this November. Japan will be fully committed to advancing the effective implementation of the upcoming new Action Plan as the Presidency of the 22nd Meeting of States Parties next year.

Madam Chair,

Humanitarian and security perspectives should be the primary focus in the discussion relating to the military use of emerging technologies such as AI. Japan emphasizes the importance of creating effective rules with the participation of stakeholder states, and in this regard, strongly supports the continued work within the framework of the WG under the CCW on the issue of lethal autonomous weapon systems (LAWS).

Japan is firmly committed to ensure a free, fair, and secure cyberspace, and looks forward to the General Assembly's endorsement of the third annual progress report of the OEWG on security of and in the use of ICTs. Once again, Japan supports the establishment of a Programme of Action (PoA) as the future permanent mechanism. Japan will spare no effort in cooperating with other Member States to address cyber issues.

I thank you, Madam Chair.

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