

69th General Conference of the IAEA

Mr. Minoru KIUCHI, Minister of State for Science and Technology Policy

President,

On behalf of the Government of Japan, I would like to congratulate you on your appointment as President of the 69th General Conference of the IAEA.

This year marks 80 years since the Atomic Bombs were used in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. We must never allow such tragedies to be repeated. With this firm belief, Japan is committed to leading international efforts toward realizing a “world without nuclear weapons”, which is our calling as the only country to have suffered from atomic bombings during war.

Looking at the international situation, the division of the international community is deepening and the security environment is becoming increasingly difficult. Under these circumstances, the IAEA's role in nuclear non-proliferation and the peaceful use of nuclear energy is more significant than ever.

In addressing nuclear non-proliferation challenges, Japan has been unwavering in its support for the Agency, particularly in tackling some of the most pressing issues.

First, Japan strongly urges North Korea to abandon its nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programs, in a complete, verifiable, and irreversible manner, in accordance with the applicable UN Security Council resolutions.

Second, Japan emphasizes the importance of verifying the peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear program. In this regard, the engagement of the IAEA is essential. As we are at a critical juncture, Japan calls on Iran to urgently resume full cooperation with the IAEA. Japan will continue to make diplomatic efforts to resolve the issue of Iran's nuclear program through dialogue.

Third, Japan is deeply concerned about the safety and security of nuclear facilities in Ukraine, including the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant. In this regard, we emphasize the importance of adhering to the seven pillars and five principles to prevent the catastrophic

consequences of a nuclear accident. Japan will continue to support the Agency's efforts.

While international society is facing these serious challenges, the need for peaceful uses of nuclear technology such as nuclear power is also increasing. Japan, in close cooperation with the Agency, will further promote the use of nuclear energy both domestically and in the international community.

On a domestic level, as stated in the Seventh Strategic Energy Plan announced in February this year, Japan will maximize the use of nuclear power as one of its carbon-free power sources, placing the highest priority on its safety. We will also promote the research and development of advanced reactors and fusion energy through international cooperation.

Furthermore, Japan has been working domestically and internationally on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy in a wide range of fields, including agriculture and medicine. We will continue to promote international cooperation, including through the Forum for Nuclear

Cooperation in Asia, which is led by Japan.

A total of 14 discharges of ALPS-treated water into the sea have been conducted safely as planned, with the involvement of the Agency. The safety of these discharges has been continuously confirmed through the Agency's ongoing reviews as well as the robust monitoring with the enhanced participation of analytical laboratories and international experts, including those from neighboring countries.

Regarding efforts toward the decommissioning of TEPCO's Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station, significant progress has been made, including the trial retrieval of fuel debris, towards a safe and steady process of decommissioning.

Japan will continue to provide science-based and transparent information and full explanations to the international community, and cooperate fully with the Agency's reviews and monitoring.

On an international level, Japan strongly supports the Agency's initiatives in the field of nuclear applications.

At the 9th Tokyo International Conference on African Development held last month, the outcome document confirmed the important role of the IAEA in peaceful uses and non-proliferation, while the Agency held a side event focusing on "Rays of Hope" and "Atoms for Food". Japan will continue to contribute to the realization of sustainable development in Africa through the promotion of nuclear science and technology.

The three "S"s—nuclear safety, nuclear security, and safeguards—are essential for the peaceful use of nuclear energy. Japan will continue to work on international skill and technology development, including through the ISCN, JAEA's support center, and IAEA Capacity Building Centre in Fukushima Prefecture, building on our experience of the accident at Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station.

To support the Agency's efforts in these areas, Japan, on top of the regular budget and TCF, made additional budgetary contributions totaling approximately 20 million euros last fiscal year.

As a responsible nuclear energy user and a designated IAEA Governor, we will continue to support

the Agency, by overcoming divisions and promoting international cooperation.

Finally, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Director General Grossi and the Secretariat, and reiterate our continued whole-hearted support for the Agency. Thank you for your attention.

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