

70th IAEA General Conference of the IAEA

Ms. ONODA Kimi, 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 70th General Conference of the IAEA.

In recent years, the significance of nuclear energy has dramatically increased due to changes in the global landscape, such as the economic growth of emerging countries and the growing importance of energy security. In the meantime, international issues regarding nuclear energy have become even more acute, and international coordination is essential to resolve these issues. The IAEA plays a central role in this field.

Today, I would like to convey Japan's determination to promote the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and nuclear non-proliferation through cooperation with the IAEA.

First, the promotion of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Japan's nuclear energy policy is to maximize the use of nuclear power, which contributes to energy security and is highly effective in reducing carbon emissions, placing the highest priority on its safety. Furthermore, under "Japan's Growth Strategy" developed this July, Japan will promote the participation of Japanese companies in nuclear power plant construction projects overseas, as well as the development and deployment of next-generation advanced reactors in Japan.

Regarding fusion energy, Japan is working towards demonstrating power generation in the 2030s. To achieve these targets, Japan will continue to work closely with the IAEA.

Furthermore, to promote the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, Japan has strongly supported the IAEA initiatives such as "Rays of Hope," which are being advanced under the leadership of Director General Grossi. These initiatives contribute to

the realization of sustainable development in countries around the world, including those in the Global South. To promote these initiatives, in addition to the Regular Budget and the Technical Cooperation Fund, Japan newly contributed approximately 7.9 million euros as extrabudgetary contributions this year.

In order to promote the peaceful uses of nuclear energy in the international community, it is important to ensure the highest standards of nuclear safety, security and safeguards, as known as “3S”.

Regarding nuclear safety, efforts towards the safe and steady decommissioning of the Tokyo Electric Power Company (TEPCO)’s Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station are making progress. This includes the removal of fuel from the Unit 2 spent fuel pool, the successful completion of two trial fuel debris retrievals, and internal investigations of the Unit 3 reactor containment vessel using micro-drones.

In particular, the discharge of ALPS-treated water into the sea has been carried out safely as planned, and its safety has been continuously confirmed by the IAEA.

Japan will continue to provide information based on scientific evidence in a transparent manner and detailed explanations to the international community. Japan will also continue to fully cooperate with the IAEA, and safely and steadily proceed with decommissioning.

At the same time, in the use of nuclear energy, it is necessary to assure its peaceful nature through IAEA safeguards. For this reason, Japan has been subject to the stringent application of IAEA safeguards, and as a result, has long been continuously receiving “broader conclusion” from the IAEA, indicating that all nuclear materials in Japan, including plutonium, remain in peaceful activities. Japan is also leading efforts towards the universalization of the Additional Protocol. As a “model country” for safeguards implementation, Japan will continue to work toward strengthening IAEA safeguards in the international community.

Furthermore, Japan will make efforts in the development of human resources and

technology for the international community, which are essential for achieving "3S", taking into account the experience of the TEPCO Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station accident. The Integrated Support Center for Nuclear Nonproliferation, Security and Human Resource Development (ISCN) and the IAEA RANET Capacity Building Centre in Fukushima Prefecture have been working towards those objectives.

Next, I would like to discuss international issues regarding nuclear energy. Not only here in Europe, but also in various regions such as East Asia and the Middle East, we are facing very severe security challenges related to nuclear energy. The IAEA is called upon to play an increasingly important role in addressing these major regional challenges.

North Korea is pressing ahead with illegal nuclear and missile development. Japan strongly urges North Korea to abandon all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programs, in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner, in accordance with relevant UN Security Council resolutions. IAEA verification is essential for its implementation.

Furthermore, the IAEA's involvement is essential for the peaceful resolution of Iran's nuclear issue. Japan urges Iran to fully cooperate with the Agency. Japan will continue all diplomatic efforts, including strengthening support for the IAEA, towards its resolution through dialogue.

In addition, Japan is deeply concerned about the nuclear safety and security of nuclear facilities in Ukraine, including Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant. It is important to comply with the seven pillars and five principles to prevent nuclear accidents. Japan will continue to support the IAEA's efforts to this end.

These efforts that I have explained so far also support the NPT regime. Japan, as the only country to have suffered from atomic bombings during war, will continue its efforts to realize a world without nuclear weapons. Japan will continue to observe its obligations under the Treaty, and support the IAEA's efforts, including from the perspective of maintaining and strengthening the NPT, which is the cornerstone of the international nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime.

Finally, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Director General Grossi and the IAEA's Secretariat, and reiterate Japan's continued commitment to providing maximum support for the IAEA. Thank you for your attention.

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