

# Message from the Minister for Foreign Affairs



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Minister for Foreign Affairs

I consider it important to account for Japan's disarmament and non-proliferation policy to as many people as possible and seek further understanding and support. This is why I am presenting this book, also known as the white paper on disarmament and non-proliferation.

Disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons as well as conventional weapons, such as small arms and light weapons and anti-personnel mines are the issues that Japan should rightly address as a member of the international community in order to develop a favorable security environment and to establish peace throughout the entire world. In this field, Japan can also make use of its lessons learnt for future success. As the only country that has suffered the devastation of nuclear weapons, Japan has called for the maintenance and strengthening of the disarmament and non-proliferation regime with a strong sense of mission while setting the three non-nuclear principles as its national basic policy. Japan's efforts have been viewed as valuable in the international community. This constitutes an important part of Japan's progress as a peaceful country during the sixty-year period after World War II, which we should be proud of it.

After the end of the Cold War, the threat of nuclear war between the US and the USSR has become a thing of the past. However, a peaceful and safe world free of nuclear weapons has yet to be achieved as a reality. The international disarmament and non-proliferation regime of the 21st Century is exposed to new threats, such as the nuclear issues of North Korea and Iran, outflow of nuclear related technologies through underground networks, and the risk of nuclear terrorism. Last year marked the sixtieth anniversary of the atomic bombings in Japan. However, states could not reach a substantial agreement in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation at the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) in May and at the High-Level Plenary Meeting of the United Nations (UN) General Assembly in September and there remain many unresolved issues.

Nevertheless, I am optimistic, as many Japanese have constantly been, about the problems after World War II, and believe that the future of disarmament and non-proliferation is not necessarily bleak. Japan submitted a draft resolution on nuclear disarmament to the UN General Assembly last

year based on public wishes strongly calling for elimination of nuclear weapons. As indicated by the fact that this draft resolution was adopted with the support of a record high 168 states, most states in the international community share a wish for nuclear disarmament and recognition of the importance of the NPT regime with Japan. I believe the adoption of this resolution by an overwhelming majority has further importance because it happened after states could not reach a substantial agreement at two important international conferences. Moreover, Japan has played an important role in building peace through submission of a draft resolution on small arms and light weapons to the UN General Assembly and promotion of mine action in developing countries with respect to the issues of conventional arms, such as small arms and light weapons and anti-personnel mines, which are killing and injuring many innocent people across the world.

Japan will continue to make various diplomatic efforts to maintain and strengthen the international disarmament and non-proliferation regime with the aim of realizing a world free from nuclear weapons and conflicts. We hope this booklet will contribute to deepening the understanding of Japan's disarmament and non-proliferation diplomacy among Japanese citizens and other citizens throughout the world.

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