

Statement by Ambassador Mitsuru Kitano, Director-General,
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Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan
at the Second Session of the Preparatory Committee
for the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT

Geneva, 22 April 2013

Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished delegates,

On behalf of the Government of Japan, I would like to express my heartfelt congratulations to you, Ambassador Cornel Feruță of Romania, on your assumption of the chairmanship of the Second Session of the Preparatory Committee. My delegation assures you of our utmost support for your efforts.

Mr. Chairman,

The year 2015 is fast approaching. Despite progress in certain areas, much of the Action Plan we all agreed to in 2010 has yet to be implemented. Japan is committed to contributing to the plan's fruition.

The NPT faces new and daunting challenges year after year, making clear the urgency of our work here. On February 12, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) carried out a nuclear test despite repeated calls from the international community to refrain from further provocations. This nuclear test is totally unacceptable as it seriously undermines the peace and security of Northeast Asia and the international community as a whole. We welcome the UN Security Council's adoption on March 7 of Resolution 2094, which strengthened existing sanctions on the DPRK and added new ones. This resolution must be fully implemented.

In order to grapple with these constant challenges, we need to promote all three pillars of the NPT in a balanced manner. This does not mean that progress in one pillar should be conditional on progress in on of the others. Rather, steady advancement should occur in all three.

Mr. Chairman,

Japan and the other members of the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI), with the strong commitment of our respective Foreign Ministers, are working to reduce nuclear risk, maintain political momentum, and devise practical and action-oriented proposals to advance disarmament and non-proliferation. As the Netherlands delegate stated earlier, at the NPDI Ministerial Meeting on April 9, our Foreign Ministers endorsed six new working papers submitted to this session of the Preparatory Committee.

They also exchanged views on the establishment of a weapons-of-mass-destruction-free zone in the Middle East, which remains one of our most important objectives. We fully support the efforts of the facilitator toward the convening of such a conference and strongly hope that one will be held soon. The concerted efforts of the conveners and the eagerness of countries of the region will be indispensable to fulfilling this aim. We urge active and constructive engagement in this matter on the part of all relevant stakeholders.

Mr. Chairman,

As the only country to have suffered atomic bombings during wartime, Japan actively contributed to the Oslo Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons in March. With strengthened resolve to seek a nuclear-weapons-free world, we continue to advance disarmament and non-proliferation education to inform the world and the next generation of the dreadful realities of nuclear devastation.

In this regard, Japan initiated the “Special Communicators for a World without Nuclear Weapons” program in 2010. Under the program more than 90 *Hibakushas*, or atomic bomb survivors, to date have shared their experiences with international audiences. With atomic bomb survivors now at an average of more than 78 years old, Foreign Minister Kishida took the initiative in establishing a “Youth Communicators for a World without Nuclear Weapons” program. Under this new program, younger generations are expected to share with the world what they themselves have learned about the harm inflicted by nuclear weapons and what they have themselves thought about what they can do to achieve their elimination. We have very high hopes for what young people can accomplish through this program.

Until nuclear weapons are abolished, it is a bitter reality that we will have to live with considerable nuclear risk. Compared to the U.S.-Soviet era of bi-polar conflict, the risk has undergone transformation and diversified. Given the awful humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons use, it is an urgent priority as well as a responsible approach to the present state of

affairs to firmly implement concrete measures contained in the 2010 NPT Action Plan regarding the CTBT, an FMCT and further reductions of nuclear arsenals in order to substantially reduce this risk.

Mr. Chairman,

The right of all States parties to peaceful use of nuclear energy is recognized under the NPT, but it is premised on the faithful fulfillment of non-proliferation obligations as well as the safety of nuclear energy, and the security of nuclear facilities and materials. From this perspective, it is therefore important to strengthen and enhance the efficiency of IAEA safeguards, the most effective tool we have for nuclear non-proliferation. Accordingly, comprehensive IAEA safeguards reinforced by an additional protocol should be the safeguards standard today.

In closing Mr. Chairman, it is our strong desire that a solid foundation is established for the 2015 NPT Review Conference through frank discussions among the NPT States parties in the current Preparatory Committee session. Japan, for its part, commits its full support towards making this a reality.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.