



Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations

866 United Nations Plaza, New York, N.Y. 10017 Phone: (212) 223-4300 · www.un.int/japan/

(Please check against delivery)

STATEMENT BY H.E. MR. AKIO SUDA
AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY
HEAD OF THE DELEGATION OF JAPAN
TO THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT
AT THE FIRST COMMITTEE OF THE 64th SESSION
OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
GENERAL DEBATE

6 OCTOBER 2009
NEW YORK

Please allow me to express our congratulations to you, Ambassador Cancela, on your assumption of the chair of the First Committee. It is fortunate for us that we can rely on your leadership in our discussions of this year's session at a time of renewed interest in disarmament. I assure you of the full support of my delegation as you carry out your significant task.

Mr. Chairman,

The world is witnessing a historic movement of the tide in the area of disarmament. A sense of hope abounds. With signs of the changing tide already appearing over the past couple of years, this year has shown a greater acceleration. The two largest nuclear holders in the world have started their negotiations on a legally-binding agreement on reducing and limiting strategic offensive arms to replace the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START), which is due to expire less than two months from today. Just two weeks ago, at the United Nations Security Council summit on nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament, a robust and substantial resolution was adopted unanimously, which, inter alia, resolved to seek a safer world for all and to create the conditions for a world without nuclear weapons. These are only a few examples and we hope a lot more are to come.

At the Security Council summit on 24 September, our new Prime Minister, Mr. Yukio Hatoyama, proclaimed that Japan has a moral responsibility to act as the only

country that has suffered from atomic bombings. Japan is thus willing to take the lead in the pursuit of the elimination of nuclear weapons.

We welcome US President Obama's speech in Prague, in which he articulated "a vision of a world without nuclear weapons". This inspired people around the world. In this connection, I would like to say to those who possess or try to acquire nuclear weapons that possessing them per se should not grant any political advantage in international politics. I believe that sharing such a view by the international community would contribute to achieving further nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

Mr. Chairman,

All states around the world have a shared responsibility. All states holding nuclear weapons must take concrete measures to significantly reduce their nuclear arsenals with a view to achieving their total elimination. Non-nuclear-weapon states, on the other hand, must faithfully comply with their non-proliferation obligations, thereby creating the necessary conditions for the goal of a world without nuclear weapons.

This shared responsibility, nevertheless, is yet to be fulfilled by the international community despite the ever accelerating favorable trend that I mentioned earlier. A large number of nuclear arsenals still exist. The nuclear non-proliferation regime is facing severe challenges. Furthermore, there is an increasing risk of terrorists acquiring nuclear material and technology. We have no time to waste. It is high time for us to take action. We cannot afford to fail another NPT Review Conference next year. The States Parties must establish effective and practical steps for all the NPT's three pillars and successfully strengthen the NPT regime.

Let me lay out some important points for these ends. First, not only some particular nuclear-weapon States, but all the states possessing nuclear weapons should take concrete steps to reduce their nuclear arsenals. While the Russian Federation and the United States are engaged in their cutback talks, other states holding nuclear weapons do not have to wait, as pointed out by the Russian President on 23 September at the General Assembly. In this regard, we welcome all nuclear disarmament efforts implemented by nuclear-weapon States, notably the recent announcement by the Prime

Minister of the United Kingdom, who announced its potential future reduction of its nuclear weapons submarines from four to three. This is a good example of a reduction with concrete figures by a nuclear-weapon State other than Russia and the US. In this context, the states holding nuclear weapons should disclose information in the process of reducing nuclear arsenals, thereby ensuring transparency. Furthermore, we also emphasize the importance of applying irreversibility and verifiability in the process of working towards the elimination of nuclear weapons.

Second, the two important disarmament treaties that complement the NPT regime should be put in place without further delay. The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) needs to enter into force as soon as possible. Japan strongly urges all states that have not yet done so to sign and ratify the Treaty at the earliest opportunity. Existing moratoriums should be maintained until its entry into force. At the successful Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Treaty held on 24 and 25 September with an unprecedented high-level attendance, our Foreign Minister, Katsuya Okada, introduced Japan's Initiative to Promote the Entry into Force of the CTBT, which includes the dispatch of high-level special envoys to Annex 2 States that have not yet signed or ratified the treaty, and the contribution to the establishment of a strong verification regime.

The negotiations on a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT) need to commence immediately in the 2010 session of the Conference on Disarmament (CD). Pending their conclusion, Japan calls upon all nuclear-weapon States and States not parties to the NPT to declare and maintain moratoriums on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons. This year, the CD experienced a rather peculiar situation. As a historic turn of events, a programme of work was adopted after a decade of stalemate, but the CD was unable to implement the very programme that the Conference itself had adopted by consensus. This is a puzzling situation that no one outside the CD can understand. The CD should live up to the expectations of the world and immediately start substantive work on FMCT negotiations and other important issues in its 2010 session.

Third, nuclear non-proliferation obligations should be faithfully observed. In order to decrease the risk of proliferation and terrorists getting their hands on nuclear material, states utilizing nuclear energy for peaceful purposes should adhere to the highest level of standards in each area of nuclear safeguards, security and safety.

Fourth, the serious violation of non-proliferation obligations with impunity must not persist and must be stopped resolutely. The DPRK's nuclear tests and missile launches are a serious threat to the peace and security of not only the Northeast Asian region but also the international community as a whole, and cannot be condoned under any circumstances. It is imperative that the DPRK comply fully with the relevant Security Council resolutions and also that all the Member States fully implement them without delay. It is regrettable that Iran has continued and expanded its uranium enrichment-related activities including the construction of a new uranium enrichment facility in defiance of calls by the international community. I support the efforts of the EU3+3 (France, Germany, the United Kingdom, China, the Russia Federation and the United States) for the peaceful and diplomatic resolution of the Iranian nuclear issue. In this context, I welcome the outcome of the meeting between EU3+3 and the Islamic Republic of Iran. I strongly hope that we could see practical progress through the meetings.

Fifth, the role of civil society should be enhanced. Disarmament and non-proliferation education is very important in this regard. In particular, the public should be well aware of the horrific effects of nuclear weapons, and Japan is committed to making its utmost efforts to pass on the experiences of Hiroshima and Nagasaki to the people all over the world and to the next generations. What's more, education also has the aspect of two-way communication between civil society and government. Political leaders and government officials should also receive constructive input from civil society. For example, we hope that the International Commission on Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament, co-chaired by Ms. Kawaguchi of Japan and Mr. Evans of Australia, with its report to be issued early next year, can greatly contribute to our work in this field.

Japan will once again submit a draft resolution entitled "Renewed determination towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons", which reflects the aforementioned elements. This resolution, amongst several other nuclear disarmament-related resolutions, garners the highest number of supporting votes at the General Assembly every year including those from some nuclear-weapon states, reaching 173, the highest ever, last year. We hope our draft resolution will be adopted once again with such overwhelming support, which should enable the NPT Review Conference next spring to successfully strengthen the NPT regime.

Mr. Chairman,

I would now like to turn to the issue of conventional weapons. Japan has been tackling this issue with a comprehensive approach which transcends disarmament, humanitarian concerns and development. In July this year, Japan concluded the Convention on Cluster Munitions in an effort to respond to the humanitarian concerns caused by cluster munitions. Japan considers it also important that an effective and meaningful international legal instrument be created within the framework of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, in which the major producers and possessors of cluster munitions participate.

Furthermore, given the serious threat posed by the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, Member States are urged to fully implement the UN Programme of Action. In this regard, Japan would like to ask all Member States to give their strong support to the Small Arms and Light Weapons resolution that Japan will submit together with South Africa and Colombia.

The Second Review Conference of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention will be held in Cartagena, Colombia this November. The Conference will highlight, amongst other things, the issue of victim assistance. Japan has long been playing an active role in international cooperation in assisting mine victims, and is ready to further strengthen such assistance and contribute to the success of the Review Conference.

Japan has consistently backed the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) initiative, which would ensure the responsible import, export and transfer of arms. Japan is pleased that a report connected to future work of the ATT was adopted by consensus at this year's Open-ended Working Group. Japan invites all UN Member States to lend their support to the draft resolution on the ATT, which will take a decision on the holding of the UN Conference in 2012.

Mr. Chairman,

This year we have successfully improved the atmosphere. Now the international community is put to the severe test of whether we can collectively turn this positive atmosphere into real and concrete actions. The first such test is this First

Committee. Next year is also critical, whether it be at the Conference on Disarmament or at the NPT Review Conference. Japan will make its best endeavors to take the lead and play a bridging role between states that hold nuclear weapons and non-nuclear-weapon states in order to achieve a safe and peaceful world through disarmament and non-proliferation.

Thank you.

