



*Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations*

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STATEMENT BY H.E. MR. TOSHIO SANO  
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HEAD OF THE DELEGATION OF JAPAN  
TO THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT  
AT THE FIRST COMMITTEE OF THE 68<sup>TH</sup> SESSION  
OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- THEMATIC DEBATE: NUCLEAR WEAPONS -  
17 OCTOBER 2013, NEW YORK

Mr. Chairman,

The issue of nuclear weapons remains of great importance for the people of Japan. Every August, we reaffirm our strong conviction at the peace memorial ceremonies in Hiroshima and Nagasaki that the tragedy caused by the use of nuclear weapons must never be repeated. Japan's aim is to continue addressing the necessity and importance to achieve our shared goal of a world without nuclear weapons to the international community. We will continuously pursue practical and progressive efforts in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

With this conviction, Japan will once again submit to the Committee a draft resolution on nuclear disarmament entitled "United Action Towards the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons". This resolution, as in previous years, places emphasis on concrete and practical actions to be taken by the international community towards the total elimination of such weapons. We strongly hope that more states than previous years will extend their support at this time.

Japan is an active member of the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI), which has worked to reduce nuclear risk, maintain political momentum, and devise practical and action-oriented proposals to advance nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Last month the NPDI held its seventh meeting with our two newest members, Nigeria and the Philippines, here in New York where we reviewed our progress and bolstered our future endeavors.

Mr. Chairman,

In his speech on nuclear disarmament in Hiroshima last July, Foreign Minister Kishida advocated “three reductions”; (1) reduction of the number of nuclear weapons, (2) reduction of the role of nuclear weapons, and (3) reduction of the incentive for development and possession of the nuclear weapons. On our journey towards a world free of nuclear weapons, reducing the number of existing nuclear armaments is the first and foremost priority. The 2010 NPT Review Conference’s Action Plan calls upon the nuclear-weapon states to honor their unequivocal undertaking to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals and to make further efforts to reduce these weapons. Japan values the steady implementation of the New START Treaty and welcomes the proposal from the US President Barak Obama on the 19<sup>th</sup> of June in Berlin to negotiate further reductions of nuclear weapons. Progressive disarmament efforts by the two states with the largest nuclear arsenals will increase momentum to begin global nuclear disarmament efforts. Japan urges all nuclear-weapon states to make disarmament efforts in good faith on a multilateral basis as required by Article VI of the NPT. In this regard, Japan is encouraged by ongoing discussions by the five nuclear-weapon states on their nuclear disarmament commitments. We look forward to positive and concrete results from their efforts.

Japan places great emphasis on the importance of not only reduction of the number of nuclear weapons, but also qualitative disarmament measures. As stated in the 2010 Action Plan, the nuclear-weapon states are called upon to promptly engage to further diminish the role and significance of nuclear arsenals. It is a common understanding that the catastrophic humanitarian consequences caused by nuclear weapons must never happen again. In order to promote nuclear disarmament, the role of nuclear weapons should be reduced in all military and security concepts, doctrines and policies.

While implementing such nuclear disarmament measures, applying the principles of transparency is essential. Transparency is central for mutual trust and it is a foundation for a stable global security environment. Two years ago the NPDI developed a draft reporting form guided by Action 21 of the NPT Action Plan, which we shared with the nuclear-weapon states and also submitted to the 2012 NPT Preparatory Committee meeting annexed to our working paper on transparency. Japan holds a high expectation that the NPDI’s input contributes to an agreement from the

nuclear-weapon states to establish a high standard reporting form, which includes appropriate reporting intervals.

Pending the completion by the nuclear-weapon states of their disarmament obligations, the non-state parties of the NPT should not remain inactive. Japan urges those states to accede to the NPT as a non-nuclear weapon state in a prompt manner without conditions.

Mr. Chairman,

It is extremely regrettable that the Conference on Disarmament (CD), as a sole multilateral disarmament negotiation forum, has not made progress since 1996 on nuclear disarmament negotiations with the conclusion of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). Last year the 67th UN General Assembly adopted multiple resolutions to hold discussions related to disarmament issues under the auspices of the UN General Assembly. Based on these resolutions, the Open-Ended Working Group on taking forward multilateral disarmament negotiations met successfully in Geneva, and a high-level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament was consequently held in New York on the 26<sup>th</sup> of September. Additionally, a group of government experts (GGE) on an FMCT will commence its work next year in Geneva. These collective movements demonstrate the international community's intolerance with the protracted impasse in this forum. We stress to all the members of the CD the necessity to overcome the present state of affairs as soon as possible.

Japan is convinced that an FMCT is an indispensable milestone towards a world without nuclear weapons. It is thus deeply disappointing that the CD has for many years failed to start FMCT negotiations despite the wide support from the international community. We firmly believe a GGE will provide a new momentum and help the CD begin its substantive work. In the meantime, Japan urges all nuclear-weapon states and states possessing nuclear weapons to declare and maintain a moratorium on the production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons purposes.

The CTBT is also one of the most important building blocks for nuclear disarmament, and it needs to be brought into force without delay. We are concerned that, seventeen years after it was opened for signature, the CTBT has not yet entered into force. Japan has seized every occasion to urge all non-states parties, particularly

the remaining eight Annex II states, to promptly sign and ratify the CTBT, and we intend to pursue with such actions. Pending the entry into force of the treaty, it is important for all nuclear-weapon states and states holding nuclear weapons to respect the moratorium on nuclear test explosions.

In accordance with the 1999 United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC) Guidelines, the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones plays a significant role in global and regional peace and security. In this regard, Japan calls for the earliest possible convening of a conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction. We support the facilitator in his efforts to realize this and call upon all parties in the Middle East to participate in the spirit of genuine and constructive cooperation. Furthermore, Japan hopes the Protocol of the Southeast Asia Nuclear-Weapon Free Zone Treaty come into force at an early date.

Mr. Chairman,

Maintaining and promoting nuclear non-proliferation is a necessary condition to further advance nuclear disarmament. One of the most effective ways to strengthen the non-proliferation regime is through enhanced and more effective IAEA safeguards. Japan urges all states that have not yet concluded and brought into force a Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement and the Additional Protocol to do so as soon as possible.

The DPRK's on-going nuclear activities, as well as its missile development programs are of grave concern not only to the Northeast Asia but to the whole international community, and Japan condemns, in the strongest terms, the nuclear test by the DPRK on the 12<sup>th</sup> of February this year in this context. The nuclear test is a clear violation of the DPRK's obligations under the relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions as well as of a series of its commitments under the Six-Party talks. Furthermore, if the DPRK readjusts and restarts its Yongbyon nuclear facilities, as it announced in April this year, it will be another violation of these obligations and commitments. Japan once again hereby stresses that the DPRK must abandon all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programs, including its uranium enrichment, in a complete, verifiable, and irreversible manner and must immediately suspend all related activities. Japan strongly urges the DPRK to take concrete actions towards denuclearisation and to refrain from any further provocative acts. Additionally, it is

also extremely important for Iran to restore international confidence regarding the peaceful nature of their nuclear programme. Japan, while taking note of the recent positive atmosphere concerning Iran's nuclear issue, urges Iran to take concrete action in accordance with the resolutions of the IAEA Board of Governors as well as the UN Security Council.

Mr. Chairman,

Before concluding my intervention; as the only country to have ever suffered atomic bombings, Japan is a country which understands by its own experience the inhumane consequences of nuclear weapon use, and thus it is our country's mission to pass down the story of the tremendous sufferings in Hiroshima and Nagasaki as historical fact across borders and generations. For this purpose, Japan has made various efforts in raising awareness of this issue and in disarmament and non-proliferation education. Japan believes that the importance of humanitarian aspects of nuclear weapons should be recognized, irrespective of various approaches toward nuclear disarmament. Therefore, the discussion on humanitarian aspects should be open to such various approaches. Furthermore, as Foreign Minister Kishida stated in his speech in Hiroshima, the foundation for international nuclear disarmament efforts must be built upon a clear understanding of humanitarian consequences caused by the use of nuclear weapons, in addition to recognition of the reality of the increasingly diversifying nuclear risks.

Regarding the Joint Statement on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons to be delivered during this First Committee, in view of the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons, Japan strongly supports the spirit of the Statement and thus joins it. At the same time, against the backdrop of an increasingly severe security environment our country is facing, we reaffirm the necessity to continue to employ an appropriate national security policy.

Japan is fully committed to achieving a peaceful and secure world free of nuclear weapons. We intend to continue our efforts to outline realistic and concrete steps for global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, and to steadily implement them for a common goal shared by humankind.

Thank you.