



DELEGATION OF JAPAN
TO THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

Statement by JAPAN
AT THE FIRST COMMITTEE
OF THE 78th SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- THEMATIC DEBATE: NUCLEAR WEAPONS -
16 OCTOBER 2023, NEW YORK

Mr. Chair,

The NPT is the cornerstone for global nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament architecture and for our common efforts to achieve a world without nuclear weapons. However, the path towards this common goal is becoming more severe, given serious challenges posed to the international security environment, including the series of destabilizing and escalatory rhetoric and acts of the Russian Federation in the course of its illegal, unprovoked aggression against Ukraine, as well as China's accelerating build-up of its nuclear arsenal without transparency nor meaningful dialogue. Maintaining and strengthening the NPT is in the interest of the entire international community. Japan will continue to advance realistic and practical efforts in line with the "Hiroshima Action Plan", which the Japanese Prime Minister Kishida Fumio announced last year.

Within this approach, Japan prioritizes both qualitative capping, by comprehensively banning nuclear testing, and quantitative capping, by banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. We believe the instruments that realize most effectively these qualitative and quantitative capping are respectively the CTBT and an FMCT. To this end, Australia, Japan, and the Philippines co-hosted a high-level event to refocus political attention on the FMCT during UNGA High-Level week this year. And, in this connection, we are deeply concerned by Russia's recent announcements about the possibility of revoking its ratification of the CTBT.

Driven by Prime Minister Kishida's strong commitment to nuclear disarmament Japan submitted a draft resolution titled "Steps to building a common roadmap towards a world without nuclear weapons" again this year which presents a fundamental way forward towards a world without nuclear weapons under the current international circumstances. The risk of the use of nuclear weapons is at its highest since the peak of the Cold War. Furthermore, there are serious divisions among States in approaches toward nuclear disarmament and a lack of confidence in the security environment. In this difficult situation, this year, we revised the resolution by adding some new, strengthened language on concrete disarmament measures to advance efforts for a world without nuclear weapons, and aimed to create new momentum for nuclear disarmament. Japan hopes that this realistic approach proposed in this draft resolution will gain the widest possible support from Member States and create new momentum for nuclear disarmament towards the 2026 NPT Review Conference.

Mr. Chair,

Japan is seriously concerned about North Korea's intensified nuclear and missile activities which pose a grave threat to the international community. It is essential for the international community to be united and fully implement the relevant UN Security Council resolutions, to achieve the complete, verifiable, and irreversible dismantlement (CVID) of all North Korea's weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles of all ranges. Japan urges North Korea to abide by all the relevant UN Security Council resolutions and return at an early date to full compliance with the NPT and IAEA safeguards.

At the G7 Summit held in Hiroshima in May this year, the G7 leaders visited the city bombed by nuclear weapons, listened to the voices of hibakusha, and directly touched upon the reality of the use of nuclear weapons and the

aspirations of the people for peace. Conveying the reality of the atomic bombings to the world is the starting point of all efforts toward nuclear disarmament. With the hibakusha, we will continue to convey the reality of the use of nuclear weapons beyond generations, including through our “Youth Leader Fund for a World without Nuclear Weapons”.

I thank you, Mr. Chair for your kind attention.

(END)