



Statement by Ambassador OGASAWARA Ichiro
Permanent Representative of Japan to the Conference on Disarmament
Plenary of the Conference on Disarmament
23 February 2023

Mr. President,

I must begin by expressing my greatest regret that once again North Korea launched an ICBM-class ballistic missile followed by two ballistic missiles on 19 February. The ICBM-class ballistic missile landed within the Japanese Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), just 200km from Hokkaido, as they did on 18 November and 24 March last year. As has been reported in some media outlets, ordinary Japanese citizens could visibly see the ballistic missile falling from the sky. It also endangered vessels in our EEZ and exposed aircraft in the surrounding area to great risk. These actions are totally unacceptable and violate multiple UN Security Council Resolutions. These launches not only constitute a grave and imminent threat to Japan and the region, but also pose a clear and serious challenge to the international community. Japan strongly condemns these dangerous and outrageous acts.

North Korea has intensified nuclear and missile activities with an unprecedented frequency and in an unprecedented manner, in addition to its escalatory rhetoric on the use of tactical nuclear weapons. Bearing in mind a possibility of further provocations by North Korea, including another nuclear test,

concerted response of the international community is critical. Japan reiterates its strong commitment to the complete, verifiable, and irreversible dismantlement (CVID) of North Korea's all weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles of all ranges. Japan urges North Korea to abide by all relevant UN Security Council Resolutions and return at an early date to full compliance with the NPT and IAEA safeguards.

Mr. President,

We are also concerned about the decision of the Russian Federation to suspend its participation in the New START Treaty, which was announced in the state of the nation address by President Putin on 21 February. Japan considers that the New START Treaty contributes to the strategic stability between the United States and the Russian Federation, and that the Treaty represents a key achievement in their bilateral efforts for nuclear disarmament, and Japan emphasizes the importance of full implementation of the Treaty.

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

(END)