

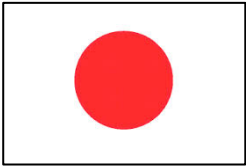
Statement by Ambassador OGASAWARA Ichiro
Permanent Representative of Japan to the Conference on Disarmament
Plenary of the Conference on Disarmament
Thematic discussion on the Prevention of Nuclear War and related material
13 June 2023

Madam President,

First of all, let me thank you for convening today's occasion which enables us to focus on the issue of paramount importance to the CD. Thanks also to the distinguished panelists for their excellent presentations and inputs they have provided with us today.

Japan has been advocating for a realistic and practical approach to nuclear disarmament. 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.

Japan reiterates the importance of the immediate commencement of long overdue negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissile material for



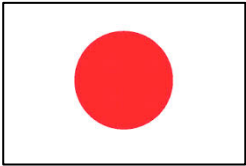
nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, as the highest priority for the CD, and regrets deeply that this august body has so far failed to start tackling this long overdue task. In order to breathe new life into the discussions on an FMCT, strong political will is necessary. Prime Minister KISHIDA Fumio of Japan reiterated our call for the immediate commencement of negotiations on an FMCT as one key element of the Hiroshima Action Plan at the 10th NPT Review Conference last year.

In addition, Japan calls for voluntary moratoria by all the Nuclear Weapon States on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices to be declared or maintained, without waiting for the start of an FMCT negotiations.

The importance of the immediate commencement of treaty negotiations as well as voluntary moratoria is also highlighted in the G7 Leaders' Hiroshima Vision on Nuclear Disarmament, issued on 19th May. Furthermore, this vision by the G7 urges all countries to refocus political attention towards the FMCT as a priority action to forestall a recurrence of the nuclear arms race, including any and all independent or complementary efforts.

Madam President,

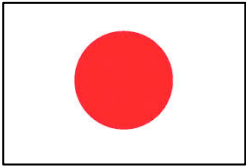
United Nations General Assembly resolution entitled "Steps to building a



common roadmap towards a world without nuclear weapons" (A/C.1/77/L.61*) which was adopted with 147 votes in favor last year also *"calls on the Conference on Disarmament to immediately commence and bring to an early conclusion, negotiations on a non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices in accordance with CD/1299 and the mandate contained therein"*. Furthermore, the resolution entitled "Treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices" (A/C.1/77/L.47) also states that the UN General Assembly *"Urges the Conference on Disarmament to immediately commence negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices on the basis of document CD/1299 and the mandate contained therein"*. I hope that due attention and follow-up action should be given by all to these sincere calls issued by the General Assembly.

Madam President,

For a long time, many countries, including Japan, have expressed their respective positions on an FMCT and have engaged in substantive discussions within the CD. While FMCT negotiations have not yet begun, many valuable documents have been adopted in the past several years, including the reports of the Group of Governmental Experts in 2015 (A/70/81), the High-Level Expert Preparatory Group in 2018 (A/73/159) and the 2018 CD Subsidiary Body 2



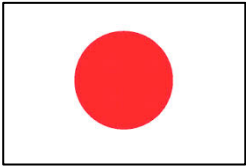
(CD/2139). Furthermore, although its final report was unfortunately not adopted, we were able to have a meaningful exchange of views at the Subsidiary Body 2 of last year's CD session. Japan highly values these important efforts and documents, presenting substantive elements and material related to a possible treaty which provide a solid foothold for future negotiations.

Madam President,

Based on these points, Japan believes FMCT is the most matured topic ready for the negotiation. Furthermore, the possible reversal of the continued downward trend of the number of nuclear weapons since its peak during the Cold War is a deeply worrying factor. The overall decline in global nuclear arsenals achieved since the end of the Cold War must continue and not be reversed.

Madam President,

With regard to the possible elements of an FMCT, Japan is of the view that the core purpose of an FMCT should be to stop any increase in the amount of fissile material available to any state party for production of nuclear weapons, as stated in its Working Paper (CD/1774), submitted to the CD in 2006, as well as Japan's views on an FMCT presented as requested by the UNGA Resolution 67/53 in 2013. Any activity that increases the amount of fissile material for nuclear

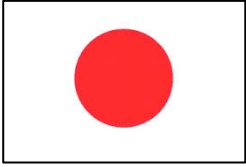


weapons should be treated as being effectively synonymous with “production”. Therefore, the core obligations under an FMCT must include obligations, not only to prohibit “production” of fissile material for nuclear weapons, but also, inter alia, to close down or to dismantle any production facilities for fissile material for nuclear weapons or to convert them to civil purposes. In this regard, I take note with great interest of the presentation from the panelist from France.

Regarding verification within an FMCT, Japan is of the view that verification should confirm that production of fissile material is not taking place, but it should not be limited to this purpose. Implementation of other possible obligations should also be verified. For example, it is crucial to verify the non-increase of stock of fissile material for nuclear weapons or nuclear explosive devices, compared to the initial amount at the date when the country in question starts being bound by FMCT, since the amount of the stock may be increased by other means than the new production. For example, the recycling of fissile material previously assigned for dismantlement can also increase the amount of the stock.

As to how to deal with existing stocks of fissile materials for nuclear weapons, Japan is of the view that this issue should be discussed and solved during negotiations. The inclusion of existing stocks within the scope of an FMCT should not be a condition for commencing negotiations.

Madam President,



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The preparations for the commencement of negotiations have already been addressed in an extensive manner. The only remaining factor is that of political will. In view of repeated commitments to this goal, I would like to call again on all Member States to exert political will to commence negotiations within the CD as soon as possible

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