

Statement by Ambassador ICHIKAWA Tomiko
Permanent Representative of Japan to the Conference on Disarmament
CD Plenary, January 23, 2024

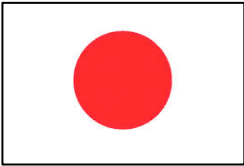
Mr President,

Allow me to start by congratulating you, Mr. President, on your assumption of the first Presidency of the Conference on Disarmament for the 2024 session. I assure you of the full support and cooperation of my delegation. I would also like to thank the Secretariat for their valuable support to the CD. In order to advance substantive work in the area of arms control and disarmament, Japan hopes that the Conference will adopt a program of work as early as possible under your able leadership so that the CD will be able to revitalize its work as the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum.

Mr. President,

78 years have passed since the atomic bombings on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Ever since that moment, Japan has assigned to itself the mission of taking the lead in international efforts to achieve a “world without nuclear weapons.” The tragedy of Hiroshima and Nagasaki must never be repeated.

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 aggression against Ukraine, as well as China’s accelerating build-up of its nuclear arsenal without transparency.

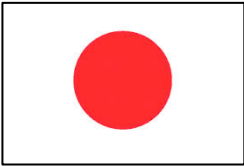


With this recognition, Japan, as the only country to have ever suffered atomic bombings in war, will continue to spearhead international efforts in realizing a "world without nuclear weapons." To this end, Japan will continue to advance realistic and practical efforts under the "Hiroshima Action Plan," which the Japanese Prime Minister Kishida announced at the 10th NPT Review Conference in 2022. In this regard, the "G7 Leader's Hiroshima Vision on Nuclear Disarmament" issued at the G7 Hiroshima Summit that Japan chaired last year has provided a solid platform to that end.

Mr. President,

Building upon the previous work of the CD, we should revitalize this disarmament forum and break its prolonged stalemate. We need to prioritize its substantive work according to the degree of maturity of each subject. From this perspective, Japan reiterates the importance of the immediate commencement of negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. In addition, Japan calls for voluntary moratoriums 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 the FMCT negotiations.

In this context, Australia, the Philippines, and Japan co-hosted a high-level event to refocus political attention on the FMCT during the UNGA High-Level week in September last year. Building on this achievement, Japan is determined to continue its efforts to heighten momentum for commencing negotiations of the FMCT.



Japan will also remain strongly committed to the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and will spare no effort to this end. Japan urges all States, that have yet to sign and/or ratify the CTBT to do so without further delay, particularly the remaining States listed in its Annex 2.

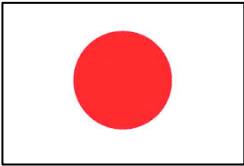
In this connection, Japan deeply regrets the decision of the Russian Federation to revoke its ratification of the CTBT, and urges Russia to continue to respect the international norm banning nuclear testing stipulated in the CTBT.

Japan welcomes the adoption of the new resolution titled “Radiological weapons” at the UN General Assembly in December last year and looks forward to substantive progress on this matter, which could also contribute to revitalization of the work of the CD.

Mr. President,

Japan also attaches great importance to discussions toward rule-making on the prevention of an arms race in outer space and on lethal autonomous weapon systems, which are particularly urgent issues in light of the rapid development of technology.

With regard to the prevention of an arms race in outer space, Japan highly values the efforts of the Open-ended Working Group on Reducing Space Threats through Norms, Rules and Principles of Responsible Behaviours, which has contributed to deepening understanding among stakeholders on space security issues and to identifying issues for further consideration. Japan strongly supports



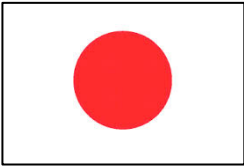
the continued work of this OEWG to be convened in 2025 and 2026 in order to deepen our discussion on potential norms of responsible behaviours which can be a basis for the elements of a possible legally binding instrument in this field in the future.

The military use of AI should be responsible, transparent and based on international law. In this regard, Japan welcomes the adoption of the mandate of the GGE on LAWS starting from this year during the Meeting of the High Contracting Parties of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons in November last year, and supports its continued work within the framework of the CCW.

Mr. President,

In October 2023, Japan submitted to the First Committee of the UN General Assembly a resolution titled “Steps to building a common roadmap towards a world without nuclear weapons,” which reflected the discussions of the 10th NPT Review Conference and the first session of the Preparatory Committee last year. This resolution was adopted at the UN General Assembly in December 2023 with 148 supporting votes. We would like to express our appreciation to the countries that co-sponsored the resolution and to other supporting countries, including two nuclear-weapon States, namely the United States and the United Kingdom.

We hope that the concrete measures proposed by the resolution will contribute to achieving meaningful outcomes in the NPT review process leading to the 11th Review Conference, including the second session of the Preparatory



Committee to be held in July and August here in Geneva. Japan will spare no effort for maintaining and strengthening the NPT which is the cornerstone of the global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime.

Mr. President,

Japan is seriously concerned about the DPRK'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 the DPRK's all 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.

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

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