

**Statement by Counsellor NAMEKAWA Hirochika
Delegation of Japan to the Conference on Disarmament**

**Plenary of the Conference on Disarmament, Thematic discussion on
“Zones free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction”
23 May 2024**

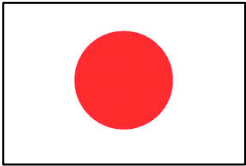
Mr. President,

As the only country to have suffered atomic bombings during war, Japan is fully aware of the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of the use of nuclear weapons. Such tragedy must never be repeated again.

Japan believes that effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat to use nuclear weapons could serve as a step towards our ultimate goal of a world free of nuclear weapons.

Japan recognizes the legitimate interest of non-nuclear-weapon States Parties to the NPT that are in compliance with their nuclear-non-proliferation obligations to receive proper security assurances. To ensure that negative security assurances contribute to reducing the role of nuclear weapons, realistic, practical and focused discussions based on comprehensive assessments of the security environment are necessary.

Japan also believes that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones can contribute to strengthening the international non-proliferation regime. As noted in Action 9 of the 2010 NPT Action Plan, we encourage the establishment of further nuclear-weapon-free zones, where appropriate, on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at by the states of the region concerned and in accordance with the 1999 Guidelines of the Disarmament Commission. The commitments, undertaken by nuclear-weapon States by signing and ratifying relevant protocols that contain negative security assurances, will contribute to further improving the security environment and to strengthening the global non-proliferation regime.



DELEGATION OF JAPAN
TO THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

In the context of the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones, the UN General Assembly (UNGA) resolution entitled "Steps to building a common roadmap towards a world without nuclear weapons" (A/RES/78/40), submitted by Japan and adopted with 148 votes in favor last year, also recognizes the importance of the decisions and the resolution on the Middle East of the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the NPT as well as the Final Documents of the 2000 and 2010 NPT Review Conferences. The resolution also reaffirms its support for the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at by the States of the region and in accordance with the 1995 resolution on the Middle East, and it notes the efforts in this regard.

We hope that due follow-up action will be taken by the UN Member States in response to this UNGA resolution.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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