

Statement by Ambassador Ichiro Ogasawara
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary,
Permanent Representative,
Delegation of Japan to the Conference on Disarmament
9 February 2023

Mr. President,

At the signing of the NPT in 1970, Japan underscored that, "the nuclear-weapon States must not have recourse to use of nuclear weapons or threaten to use such weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States" and this statement underpins our position even today.

Last year, on the very first day of the NPT Review Conference, Japanese Prime Minister Kishida Fumio announced the "Hiroshima Action Plan" in which he stressed the primordial importance of continuing the record of non-use of nuclear weapons. 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: neither nuclear weapons coercion as we currently witness, nor, needless to say, nuclear weapons use can never be tolerated. Japan urges all States to make every effort to ensure that nuclear weapons are never used again and refrain from any inflammatory rhetoric concerning the use of nuclear weapons.

Mr. President,

In this regards, President Putin's speech on Russia's nuclear force, in the context of the aggression against Ukraine, squarely contradicts the Joint Leaders' Statement by 5 nuclear weapon States on Preventing Nuclear War and Avoiding Arms Race in January last year affirming that a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought.

The series of actions and statements by Russia also run counter to the Budapest Memorandum on security assurances. Paragraph 2 of the Memorandum reaffirms the obligation to "refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of Ukraine". Japan urges the Russian Federation to honor, not by words, but by actions, its own commitments and its declared obligation in terms of security assurances, including related to nuclear weapons.

Mr. President,

Japan believes that effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons (NSA) could serve as a step towards our ultimate goal of a world free of nuclear weapons. I would like to recall what has been achieved so far regarding the NSA, including the adoption of the UN Security Council

Resolution 984, the Final Documents of the 2010 NPT Review Conference, especially Actions 7 and 8 of the 2010 Action Plan, and more recently, aforementioned Joint Statement of the Leaders of the Five Nuclear-Weapon States.

Mr. President,

Given the ongoing challenges to the international peace and security, 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 security assurances. It is our belief that NSAs, in order to serve as a step for all states, need to be examined with due consideration and assessment of the security environment. To this end, we think that realistic, practical and focused discussions are required. Moreover, Japan considers that NSAs can contribute to reducing the role of nuclear weapons.

In this regard, Japan appreciates the work undertaken by the Subsidiary Body 4 established by this august Body and dedicated to the discussion on the NSAs. We appreciate the able leadership shown by the Indonesian coordinator, even though the Body could not produce a consensual outcome document. We believe the work conducted under the Subsidiary Body could constitute one of the good basis for further discussions.

Japan 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 Review Conference Final Document, 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. By signing and ratifying relevant protocols that contain negative security assurances, Nuclear Weapon States would undertake individual commitments with respect to the status of such zones to not use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against States that are party to such protocols. These commitments will contribute to further improving the security environment and to strengthening the global non-proliferation regime.

In the context of the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones, the resolution entitled "Steps to building a common roadmap towards a world without nuclear weapons" (A/C.1/77/L.61*), submitted by Japan to the First Committee of the United Nations General Assembly and then adopted by the General Assembly with 147 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 and the Final Documents of the 2000 and 2010 NPT Review Conferences, and reaffirming 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.

We hope that due attention and follow-up action should be given by the Member States, including Nuclear Weapon States, to this sincere call issued by the General Assembly.

I thank you, Mr. President.
