



DELEGATION OF JAPAN
TO THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

Statement by OGASAWARA Ichiro

Ambassador of Japan to the Conference on Disarmament

At the First Committee of the 77th Session of the General Assembly

— General Debate —

October 6, 2022, New York

Mr. Chair,

At the outset, I would like to extend my congratulations to you, Ambassador Mohen Pieris, on your assumption of the Chairpersonship of this First Committee. I assure you of my Delegation's full support and cooperation.

Mr. Chair,

77 years have passed since the atomic bombings on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Ever since this moment, Japan assigned to itself this 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.

It is regrettable that the final document of the 10th NPT Review Conference was not adopted due to the objection of only one country. However, this bitter outcome should not hinder by any means our joint courses of action toward a world without nuclear weapons. To this end, Japan will again this year submit to the First Committee a draft resolution on nuclear disarmament. We hope the resolution will garner the widest possible support from Member States as a vehicle for our genuine aspiration for our shared goal.

On the very first day of the NPT Review Conference, Japanese Prime Minister Kishida announced the "Hiroshima Action Plan" which is rooted in the following five actions; (1) sharing the recognition on the importance of continuing the record of non-use of nuclear weapons; (2) enhancing transparency, including the disclosure of information on the status of production of fissile materials; (3) maintaining the decreasing trend of the global nuclear stockpile; (4) securing nuclear non-proliferation and promote the peaceful uses of nuclear energy; (5) promoting the accurate understanding of the realities of nuclear weapons use, especially through encouraging visits to Hiroshima and Nagasaki by international leaders and others.

Mr. Chair,

Since the height of the Cold War, there has been a consistent decrease in the global nuclear stockpile. This downward trend must be maintained and shall not be reversed. The early commencement and conclusion of an FMCT negotiation is crucial to preventing the increase of the number of nuclear weapons. In this regard, Japan calls on the nuclear weapon States to declare or maintain moratoria on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices.

Last month, to build momentum towards facilitating the entry into force of the CTBT, the High-level meeting of the Friends of the CTBT was convened with the participation of many heads of states and governments and ministers. During the meeting, Prime Minister Kishida reiterated the importance of the early entry into force of the CTBT and emphasized that all existing moratoria on nuclear weapon test explosions should be maintained.

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. In this regards, President Putin's speech on Russian 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 this year affirming that a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought. Japan urges the nuclear-weapon States, in particular the Russian Federation, to honor, not by words, but by actions, their crucial commitment in the Statement. Japan condemns the words and actions implying nuclear threats by the Russian Federation in their course of its aggression against Ukraine.

Concrete actions should be taken to reduce the risk of unintended nuclear weapon use. Efforts to increase transparency and accountability through reporting will contribute to increasing trust and confidence among all Member States. Japan also encourages China to continue its efforts to fulfill its responsibility as a nuclear weapon state within the NPT and an important player in the international community and to engage in bilateral dialogues with the United States under the NPT.

Mr. Chair,

Japan is deeply concerned about North Korea's continued development of nuclear and missile capabilities and condemns a series of the recent launches, including the one on October 4th, which flew over the Japanese territory for the first time in five years, and a further missile launch the following day. Japan calls on all Member States to reaffirm their strong commitment to the goal of achieving complete, verifiable and irreversible dismantlement (CVID) of all of North Korea's nuclear weapons, existing nuclear programs, as well as ballistic missiles of all ranges in accordance with relevant Security Council resolutions. We also call on all Member States to fully implement these resolutions.

Mr. Chair,

The risk of the use of biological and chemical weapons is also increasing, which underlines the vital importance of the Biological and Chemical Weapons Conventions. We support the activities of the Organization for the Prohibition Chemical Weapons (OPCW). Japan is willing to extend its full support to achieving success at the Ninth Review Conference of the BWC this year.

Mr. Chair,

Japan deplores that the world today constantly observes conventional weapons being used in actual warfare, causing many civilian casualties. This highlights the urgency of the universalization and implementation of conventional arms control and disarmament frameworks. It is because of this sense of urgency that Japan, as the Chair of the Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance Committee of the APMBC, promotes international cooperation for mine action. Japan itself also nationally supports actions against mines, cluster munitions and unexploded ordnances as well as the collection and disposal of small arms and light weapons around the world. Last year in 2021, our contribution across those areas surpassed 41 million US Dollars.

Once again this year, Japan, alongside Colombia and South Africa, will submit to the First Committee a draft resolution on "the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects" which was drawn from the successful outcome of the BMS8 of the UN Programme of Action this year. Japan hopes that a consensus adoption of this resolution will demonstrate our united determination to tackle this problem.

Mr. Chair,

Japan welcomes the ongoing discussions on emerging technologies in the area of lethal autonomous weapons systems (LAWS) in the framework of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, in particular, those of the Group of Government Experts.

Japan supports the open-ended working group to foster common understanding on responsible behavior as a practical step to further develop and consolidate relevant norms, rules and principles in the outer space. In this regard, Japan has decided to commit not to conduct destructive, direct-ascent anti-satellite (ASAT) missile testing.

Finally, Japan welcomes the adoption of the annual progress report of the OEWG on security of and in the use of ICTs. Japan will continue to actively contribute to the promotion of a free, fair, and secure cyberspace.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.