

STATEMENT BY NOBUSHIGE TAKAMIZAWA
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TO THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

AT THE FIRST COMMITTEE OF THE 73TH SESSION
OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
- THEMATIC DEBATE: NUCLEAR WEAPONS -
19 OCTOBER 2018, NEW YORK

Mr. Chairman,

Japan subscribes to the statement by the NPDI (Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative), as well as the statement made on behalf of the BLM (Broadly Like Minded) countries. I will now make some additional points from a national perspective.

Mr. Chairman,

A world free of nuclear weapons is a common objective for us all; thus all states shoulder the responsibility to advance global efforts for disarmament and non-proliferation. After the 2015 NPT Review Conference, we are witnessing the international community divided with different views on how to proceed nuclear disarmament based on different perspectives linking current security situation and nuclear disarmament. These recent developments pose a challenge for cooperative relations among states, which is indispensable for progress in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. In order to narrow this gap, we need to seriously consider what to do and how to proceed at this current juncture.

Mr. Chairman,

First, the NPT is the most universal treaty in the world and the cornerstone of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. We should be united in our efforts to maintain and strengthen this treaty. In particular, all States Parties should reaffirm their commitment and begin to take concrete steps based on the 2010 NPT Action Plan and past NPT agreements towards a successful outcome of the 2020 NPT Review Conference.

Second, in order to fulfill Article VI obligations of the NPT, which is imperative to uphold the regime, all nuclear-weapon States must make further efforts to comply with this unequivocal undertaking. We call upon nuclear-weapon States to take the following actions:

- To further reduce all types of nuclear weapons on a unilateral and bilateral basis, and eventually engage in multilateral negotiations with all nuclear-weapon States;
- To enhance transparency, including through regular reports with numerical information;
- To reduce the risk of accidental or unauthorised use of nuclear weapons and to enhance nuclear security in view of the catastrophic humanitarian consequences from the use of nuclear weapons.

Third, states which are not parties to the NPT should not remain inactive. These states should take concrete disarmament measures on a voluntary basis. Furthermore, Japan strongly urges these states to accede to the NPT as a non-nuclear-weapon state at the earliest and without conditions.

Fourth, practical and concrete nuclear disarmament measures should proceed with constructive cooperation from all states.

- As for the CTBT, we welcome the recent ratification by the Kingdom of Thailand and the signature of Tuvalu. At the same time, we call upon all countries, particularly, the remaining eight Annex II States to ratify the treaty.

- The final report of the High-Level FMCT Expert Preparatory Group successfully sets out a full-range of potential treaty elements and presents recommendations, which could provide very useful signposts for future negotiators. We fully agree on the need to carry out further expert work, which should lead to actual negotiations. Moreover, until the entry into force of an FMCT, Japan strongly urges all nuclear-weapon States and states possessing nuclear weapons to declare or maintain a moratorium on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.

- Nuclear disarmament verification is indispensable to achieve transparent, verifiable, and irreversible reduction of nuclear weapons. Japan will contribute to the activity of the GGE (Group of Governmental experts) on this issue and the efforts of the IPNDV (International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament

Verification). These initiatives are important platforms where all states can work together to identify and apply measures and technologies necessary for verification.

- There are various approaches to achieve our common goal, but whatever the approach is, it is important to continue to promote disarmament and non-proliferation education. It is imperative for us to pass on, particularly to younger generations, the threat of the diverse nuclear risks, the devastation that was caused by the use of nuclear weapons, and the necessary steps to overcome these challenges while encouraging developing critical thinking skills among young generations.

Fifth, when considering nuclear disarmament, it is necessary to address security issues directly. Nuclear disarmament and the security are mutually reinforcing and must move forward together. In this regard, in November, the third meeting of the EPG (the Group of Eminent Persons for substantive Advancement of Nuclear Disarmament) will take place in Nagasaki to pursue a nuclear disarmament agenda, which will address hard questions about the relationship between security and disarmament.

Sixth, in parallel with nuclear disarmament, it is important to strengthen and maintain nuclear non-proliferation to enhance peace and security. Accordingly, resolving regional nuclear proliferation issues are vital. Japan reaffirms our strong commitment to the goal of achieving CVID (complete, verifiable, and irreversible dismantlement) of all of North Korea's nuclear weapons, existing nuclear programs, and related facilities as well as ballistic missiles of all ranges, in accordance with relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions. Mindful of the recent developments, including the U.S-North Korean summit, as well as the three Inter-Korean Summits, Japan calls on North Korea to take concrete steps towards denuclearization. We also call on all Member States to fully implement the relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions.

Mr. Chairman,

Lastly, in order to narrow our differences and seek a common ground, an interactive discussion among states is indispensable. All states, including nuclear weapon states, states possessing nuclear arsenals, and non-nuclear

weapon states, are encouraged to discuss and improve understanding on disarmament and non-proliferation measures, and also undertake answering the hard questions. We must fully utilize existing frameworks, including this committee, the NPT and the CD, and seriously consider effective ways to enable substantive discourse. These discussions could serve as CBMs (confidence-building measures) and set the foundation for a stable international security environment.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.