



Statement by Ambassador ICHIKAWA Tomiko
Permanent Representative of Japan to the Conference on Disarmament
Conference on Disarmament Plenary, 6 June 2024
Thematic discussion on
“Building Capacity in Disarmament through Education and Research.”

Mr. President,

To achieve our common goal, a world without nuclear weapons, it is essential to raise public awareness of the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of the use of nuclear weapons and the threat posed by their proliferation, as well as how to overcome these challenges. Disarmament and non-proliferation education is a useful and effective means to this end.

As the only country ever to have suffered atomic bombings during war, Japan is committed to ensuring that the tragedies of Hiroshima and Nagasaki will never be forgotten and their messages will be passed on to future generations. For this purpose, Japan encourages leaders, youth and all generations from around the world to visit Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and to interact with communities and people, including the hibakusha, those who have suffered the use of nuclear weapons irrespective of their nationalities and origins and who pass on their experiences to future generations.

Mr. President,

In this context, I would like to refer to the following three initiatives Japan has taken in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation education and research.

First, in 2013, Japan launched a programme entitled “Youth Communicator for a World without Nuclear Weapons,” in addition to the “Special Communicator for a World without Nuclear Weapons” initiated in 2010.

Under the programme for youth, young people such as high school and university students participate in various international conferences and events to share the tragic consequences of the use of nuclear weapons beyond borders and generations. As of 31 May 2024, a total of 739 youth communicators had been dispatched on 50 occasions around the world, in addition to 316 special communicators on 105 occasions.

Second, following the announcement by Japanese Prime Minister KISHIDA Fumio at the 10th NPT Review Conference in 2022 to establish the “Youth Leader Fund for a World Without Nuclear Weapons”, the first session of the programme has started in 2023, thanks to the UNODA. The primary goal of this programme is to bring future leaders from both nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States to Japan, to learn first-hand about the realities of nuclear weapons use. It also aims to create a global network of diverse international cohorts of future leaders and other key actors from different sectors. The 100 participants of the first cohort selected in 2023 from 63 countries received training in the general principles of nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation, and arms control through online courses. A selected cohort will also participate in a study tour in Hiroshima and Nagasaki this year.

Third, in his speech at the UNGA Plenary Debate in September 2023, Prime Minister Kishida announced the establishment of the “Japan Chair for a world without nuclear weapons” to be based within international research institutes and think tanks. Japan has contributed approx. 22 million USD in total to *the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, *the Vienna Center for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation*, and *the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) Asia*.

Under this project, research posts dedicated to researching nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation have been established at each institute. Researchers of the “Japan Chair” are expected to disseminate the results of such research to contribute to deepening international discussions in this area.

Mr. President,

Before concluding, I would like to touch upon the United Nations Programme of Fellowships on Disarmament. Japan invites the participants of this programme to visit Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and 1027 participants have visited so far since 1982. Japan is also cooperating with the UNODA in terms of building and strengthening their network with the alumni of this fellowship. Our delegation is pleased to host a reception this evening inviting the 25 fellows who are presently visiting Geneva. We hope that this will promote networking between current and past participants as well as the diplomatic corps here in Geneva.

Japan is determined to continue its efforts on disarmament and non-proliferation education and research.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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