



DELEGATION OF JAPAN
TO THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

Statement by Ambassador Ichiro OGASAWARA
at the CD Plenary Meeting (July 27th 2021)
Thematic Debate under Agenda Item 7: “Transparency in armaments”

Madame President,

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to you, Ambassador NORTON, for setting the thematic debate on “Transparency in armaments”, as transparency is of fundamental importance in arms control and disarmament. I would also like to extend my heartfelt welcome to our dear colleagues, Ambassadors of Nigeria and Ukraine. As one of the worst disasters prone countries, I would like to join my voice to that of the distinguished representative of Russia in expressing condolence and sympathy to those who have recently suffered from natural disaster.

Madame President,

The previous NPT Review Conferences acknowledged the principle of transparency as one of the three principles of nuclear disarmament. It is the most basic principle which underpins the other two principles, namely, irreversibility and verifiability. Without transparency, nuclear disarmament cannot be verified, nor would States parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty have sufficient confidence that nuclear disarmament measures have been implemented in an irreversible manner.

As Madame President has already mentioned, the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative, NPDI, has made a meaningful contribution in terms of transparency. Since the submission of working paper (NPT/CONF.2015/PC.I/WP.12) presenting a draft standard nuclear disarmament reporting form to the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Review Conference in 2012, the NPDI, of which Japan is a member, has continuously submitted the working paper on this subject to the NPT review process, including the current cycle.

Enhancing transparency and reporting mechanism within the NPT review process is important for accountability of both nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon States. In particular, efforts undertaken by the nuclear-weapon-states to enhance transparency by submitting their national reports and through discussion of these reports, including explanations and exchanges of information about their nuclear doctrine, strategy and capability, contribute to consolidating the common basis for confidence-building and nuclear disarmament efforts.

In this regard, the NPDI has made, in addition to various others, the following proposals;

- a) All States parties should report on the implementation by all Member States;
- b) All nuclear-weapons States are strongly encouraged to agree upon a “standard reporting form” and to further explain and share information regarding issues covered in their reports; and,
- c) All States parties should agree on having an interactive discussion both at the Review Conferences and at the Preparatory Committees, and making future regular national reports at specified frequencies.

Madame President,

Nationally, Japan has also actively contributed to increasing transparency regarding nuclear weapons, for example, by submitting the national working paper entitled “Transparency, reporting and strengthening the review process” (NPT/CONF.2015/WP.32) to the 2015 NPT Review Conference.

Japan has also submitted draft resolutions on the elimination of nuclear weapons to the First Committee of the UN General Assembly every year. Last year’s resolution entitled “Joint courses of action and a future-oriented dialogue toward a world without nuclear weapons” (A/RES/75/71) was adopted with 150 votes in favor. The resolution is encouraging “all States, in particular the nuclear-weapon States, to immediately take concrete measures to enhance transparency and mutual confidence, including, inter alia, by providing frequent and detailed reporting on the implementation of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and opportunities for discussion of these reports.” Japan believes that this proposal may provide a common basis for the tenth NPT Review Conference.

To strengthen transparency, the Group of Eminent Persons for the Substantive Advancement of Nuclear Disarmament, which Japan has been promoting since 2017, also makes a variety of proposals. For example, its Chair’s Report published in November 2019 stated that N[uclear-] W[eapon] S[tates] could agree to report on their nuclear weapon system and weapon-usable nuclear material holdings in an agreed common format.

Madame President,

Japan believes that transparency in arms control regimes relating to other types of weapons is equally important. In particular, in the field of conventional weapons, transparency is key to fostering mutual trust among Member States with respect to each other’s armaments and to preventing excessive accumulation of armaments. From this perspective, Japan has played an active role in launching the

United Nations Register of Conventional Arms (UNROCA), which requires UN Member States to provide information on their import, export, military holdings, and procurement through national production of conventional weapons. Japan has been reporting to the UN Register every year since its establishment in 1993. Japan calls on all UN Member States to provide the Secretary-General of the UN with the requested information in accordance with the relevant UN Resolutions.

Other international instruments related to conventional weapons, such as the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) and the United Nations Program of Action on small arms and light weapons (UNPOA), also provide useful reporting mechanisms. Japan also calls for the implementation of such reporting mechanisms.

Transparency and confidence building measures are equally vital in the implementation of the Biological Weapons Convention. Japan has contributed to enhance transparency and confidence-building measures by, for example, presenting a working paper (BWC/MSP/2019/MX.3/WP.2/Rev.1) to the Meeting of Experts in 2019 with a view to increasing the number of submissions of the Confidence Building Measures Report by States Parties. On this occasion, allow me to reiterate our call on State Parties to submit an annual report containing information on research centres and laboratories; research programs; outbreaks of infectious diseases; and domestic legislation, regulations and other measures, as well as vaccine production facilities.

Madame President,

In order not only to foster trust among countries, but also to enhance credibility in arms control regimes, including the NPT, efforts taken by each Member State to be as accountable and transparent as possible are of great value. Japan will continue to make concrete contributions to further strengthen such efforts.

I thank you, Madame President.