

(Check against delivery)

Draft Statement by the Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations
at the United Nations Disarmament Commission 2018

April 02, 2018

Chairperson,

At the outset, on behalf of the Japanese delegation, I would like to congratulate you and the Government of Australia on the assumption of the Chairmanship of the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC). I would also like to congratulate newly elected members of the UNDC Bureau. I assure you and the Bureau members of my Delegation's full support and cooperation.

Chairperson,

Last year, the UNDC successfully adopted "Recommendations on Practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons" by consensus, breaking the 17-year-long deadlock. Japan welcomes this positive development and renews its hope that we all will work together to find a way to further reinvigorate the UNDC, which was once renowned as the leading deliberative UN body in the field of disarmament. Japan will continue to actively participate in the UNDC and look forward to working together with other member states.

Chairperson,

Towards the realization of a world free of nuclear weapons, we should advance nuclear disarmament efforts with the participation, both from nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon States, taking into account existing security threats. Japan will continuously call for the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and its universalization, while calling for maintaining all existing moratoria on nuclear tests explosions. With respect to the Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty (FMCT), we hope that the discussion at the High Level FMCT Expert Preparatory Group and its Informal Consultative Meeting open to all UN member states will provide an impetus to break the stagnation at the Conference on Disarmament (CD) and will pave a way to the commencement of a FMCT negotiation in the CD. Moreover, increasing transparency of nuclear arsenals is important since verification of irreversible nuclear disarmament requires transparency.

Chairperson,

The international community faces rising tension in the security environment. North Korea's nuclear and missile programs pose an unprecedented, grave and imminent threat to the entire international community. The international community needs to reaffirm that a nuclear-armed North Korea will never be accepted. Despite North Korea's recent engagement in dialogue and moves towards denuclearization we should judge North Korea's intention in terms of what they are actually doing, not in terms of what we hope they are doing. We need to ensure that North Korea's words are turned into concrete actions toward the goal of complete, verifiable and irreversible dismantlement of North Korea's nuclear weapons and missiles. Japan reaffirms that the maximum pressure campaign should remain in place until North Korea changes its course and takes decisive, irreversible steps to denuclearize, and Japan calls for the cooperation of the international community in unison.

Chairperson,

As the only country to have ever suffered atomic bombings in wartime, Japan has been at the forefront in the fields of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in our joint endeavor towards a world free of nuclear weapons. It is of our view that nuclear disarmament must be promoted based on two understandings, a clear understanding of the humanitarian impacts of the use of nuclear weapons and the objective assessment of the reality of the security situation.

As a basis for promoting concrete and practical nuclear disarmament measures based on these two understandings, it is imperative to maintain and strengthen the NPT regime. In this regard, all NPT Member States, including nuclear weapon States, need to fulfill their obligations under Article 6, while cooperating towards non-proliferation. The NPT remains to be the cornerstone of the international nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. In order to strengthen the NPT regime, it is vital to achieve a meaningful outcome at the 2020 NPT Review Conference. Seizing every opportunity, Japan will make utmost efforts to this end through the 2020 NPT review process. Japan will, as a member of the Non-proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI), continue to strengthen cooperation with other States and groups of States. Japan will provide input based on recommendations made by the "Group of Eminent persons for Substantive Advancement of Nuclear Disarmament", which is to achieve substantive advancement of nuclear disarmament based on rebuilding cooperation and trust among countries with different approaches, to the Second Session of the Preparatory Committee of the 2020 NPT review conference.

Chairperson,

The importance of outer space activities has never been greater than it is today. However, serious challenges have emerged that need to be addressed with urgency such as the congestion in space and a greater volume of space debris. It has become critical for the welfare and development for all humanity to ensure safety, security and sustainability of outer space activities.

Japan supports and has worked tirelessly to preserve the environment of outer space. We believe that it is important to develop initiatives to ensure confidence and mutual trust between space actors, in particular through transparency and confidence building measures. In this regard, we are prepared to engage constructively in the discussion on preparation of recommendations to promote the practical implementation of transparency and confidence building measures in outer space activities with the goal of preventing an arms race in outer space. In order to enhance the security and sustainability of outer space, Japan supports non-binding but verifiable transparency and confidence building measures which are the most likely to gain wide acceptance and adherence within the international community.

Japan reaffirms the importance of enhancing the rule of law in outer space and will continue to work with other nations to that end. In this connection, we reiterate the need to implement principles of responsible behavior for outer space activities, which could be an important step for the international rule-making. In particular, we encourage all states to refrain from any action which brings about, directly or indirectly, damage or destruction of space objects. We thus continue to express our concerns about the development of ASAT-capability.

Chairperson,

Last but not least, it is important for us to continuously work together to produce constructive outcome, in accordance with its original mandate so that we make a positive impact on the UN disarmament machinery.

Japan will endeavor to ensure that the first year of the current triennial cycle leads to a positive outcome.

I thank you, Chairperson.