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STATEMENT BY TOSHIO SANO
AMBASSADOR OF JAPAN
TO THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

AT THE FIRST COMMITTEE OF THE 70TH SESSION
OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

GENERAL DEBATE

12 OCTOBER 2015, NEW YORK

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, I would like to extend my congratulations to you, Ambassador van Oosterom, on your assumption of the Chairmanship to this important First Committee. I assure you of my Delegation's full support and cooperation, and look forward to closely working with you and all other colleagues to carry out our important common tasks.

Mr. Chairman,

The year two thousand fifteen marks the 70th year since the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and the end of World War II. Japan, throughout these seventy years, has walked the path of a peace-loving nation, while consistently respecting freedom, democracy, fundamental human rights and the rule of law, based on feelings of deep remorse over the war. In this milestone, Japan has renewed its commitment towards a world free of nuclear weapons.

It was extremely regrettable that we were not able to adopt the final document in the 2015 NPT Review Conference. Today, the NPT regime faces serious challenges, but the international

community must use these challenges as an opportunity to further advance nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Japan is determined to continue to make utmost efforts for further maintaining and strengthening the NPT regime to secure the world's peace and stability.

Given the result of the 2015 NPT Review Conference, Japan will submit to this committee its resolution entitled, "United Action with Renewed Determination towards the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons," which sets out practical and concrete measures to be taken towards a world free of nuclear weapons. Japan believes it is important to implement these measures in a progressive manner to ultimately eliminate nuclear weapons. We strongly hope that our resolution gains wide support.

Mr. Chairman,

The NPT is the cornerstone of the global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime, and its three pillars should be implemented in a balanced manner to maintain its effectiveness. However, it can hardly be denied that the implementation of the nuclear disarmament pillar lags behind in comparison to the other pillars. The lack of substantial progress in nuclear disarmament has brought frustration and distrust among non-nuclear weapon States. Therefore, the nuclear-weapon States are required to take the agreed steps contained in the Final Documents of the Review Conferences in 1995, 2000, and 2010. Consequently, we strongly urge nuclear-weapon States to take voluntary disarmament measures despite the lack of agreement during the last Review Conference. Among other things, Japan underscores the importance of improving transparency in their nuclear forces and expanding their efforts to that end, including providing more frequent and further detailed reporting on nuclear forces throughout the next review cycle. We urge all nuclear-weapon States and states possessing nuclear weapons to further reduce all types of nuclear weapons, and eventually

multilateralize nuclear weapon reduction negotiations. Japan, along with other members of NPDI, will continue to propose concrete and practical measures.

The early entry into force of the CTBT and the early commencement of an FMCT negotiation are important building-blocks in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. As for the CTBT, last month, the Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida, together with Kazakhstan's Foreign Minister co-chaired the Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the CTBT. Since next year will mark the 20th anniversary of the opening of the CTBT for signature, Japan once again urges those countries listed in Annex II of the Treaty to sign and ratify the Treaty.

As for the FMCT, the report adopted by the FMCT GGE under the Canadian Chair is a well-balanced document covering all important issues. We call upon all concerned States to examine the report seriously and to consider the next fresh step towards the commencement of a negotiation.

Mr. Chairman,

It is disappointing that the Conference on Disarmament (CD) has been unable to do substantive work as the sole multilateral negotiating forum for nearly two decades. Although this year we did hold a series of substantive discussions, which were more in-depth than last year, we believe that CD member States should demonstrate a commitment to revitalize the CD. Japan's priority to start the negotiation of an FMCT in the CD as soon as possible remains unchanged.

Mr. Chairman,

In order to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons, both disarmament and non-proliferation are important, and should be addressed in a mutually reinforcing manner.

Japan strongly condemns the continuation of the DPRK's nuclear and missile development programs as it poses a serious threat to the peace and security of the region and the entire international community. It is a clear violation of the relevant Security Council resolutions and the 2005 Joint Statement of the Six Party Talks. We strongly urge the DPRK to comply with the relevant Security Council resolutions, to refrain from any further provocative action and to abandon all its nuclear weapons and missile development programs in a complete verifiable and irreversible manner.

As for the Iranian nuclear issue, Japan welcomes the two agreements, the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action between the EU3+3 and Iran, as well as the "Roadmap" between the IAEA and Iran. These agreements will serve as a contribution to the reinforcement of the international non-proliferation regime. We strongly hope that the agreements will be steadily implemented. In this regard Japan will continue to support the work of the IAEA, under the leadership of Director-General, Mr. Yukiya Amano, which plays an important role for verification and inspection.

Mr. Chairman,

With respect to the CWC (Chemical Weapons Convention), Japan welcomes the nearly completed destruction of Syria's chemical weapons. As for the use of toxic chemicals as weapons in Syria, Japan welcomes the adoption of Security Council resolution 2235 to establish an OPCW-UN Joint Investigative Mechanism (JIM) and calls on all parties to cooperate fully with the investigation.

In addition, Japan has been committed to making the fullest possible efforts to complete the destruction of the abandoned

chemical weapons in China through close coordination and cooperation with China.

With regard to the BWC (Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention), this year marks the 40th anniversary of the entry into force of the convention. Japan expects that the discussion during the current inter-sessional process will promote common understandings and effective actions towards the next Review Conference in 2016.

Mr. Chairman,

Japan welcomes the entry into force of the ATT (Arms Trade Treaty) and successful convening of the First Conference of States Parties in Cancun, Mexico. We greatly appreciate the leadership bestowed by the Mexican Presidency. The ATT is an epoch-making achievement in the history of conventional arms control, and it benefits and strengthens the rule of law and human security, and builds confidence among States Parties. It is important that the basis for the implementation of the treaty be further consolidated at the sessions of the Conference of States Parties in 2016. We expect the leadership of Nigeria as the President of the Conference to achieve this endeavor.

Mr. Chairman,

At the 2015 NPT Review Conference, 76 states, including nuclear weapon States, participated in the Joint Statement on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Education. We believe that education is a valuable tool to advance nuclear disarmament by raising awareness. Every year, many people, including from abroad travel to those cities devastated by nuclear weapons. We hope that more people will observe the reality of the nuclear bombing.

Mr. Chairman,

Finally, I would like to conclude my statement by stressing that ensuring national security and advancing disarmament, including nuclear disarmament, do not contradict but are complimentary with each other. Disarmament will definitely improve the regional and global security environment and enhance confidence among States. Japan strongly calls upon all States to take united actions towards the common goal of achieving a peaceful and secure world free of nuclear weapons through nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation efforts.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.