Statement by H.E. Mr. Yoshiki MINE
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to the Conference on Disarmament
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Disarmament and Non–Proliferation Education
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Madam Chair,

Distinguished delegates,

First of all I would like to express my appreciation for today’s NGO presentations on various disarmament issues. Japan highly values the activities by civil society, and continues to closely cooperate with NGOs. Today I would like to take this opportunity to touch upon disarmament and non–proliferation education, as NGOs play a significant role in this field.

Japan places great importance on disarmament and non–proliferation education, and we are making various efforts in accordance with the 2002 UN Study on Disarmament and Non–proliferation Education. Consequently, it is my great pleasure to introduce some examples of our endeavors in this field.

Madam Chair,

To start with, in line with paragraph 13 of the recommendations of the UN Study, every year since 1983 the UN Disarmament Fellowship Program has been invited to Japan, resulting in a total of 620 participants to date. This year, the fellows, who are with us during the First Committee, recently completed their visit to Hiroshima and Nagasaki, which I hope helped to provide new insight into the reality of atomic bombings.
In addition to the UN Fellowship Program, every year since 1989 Japan has also sponsored a UN Conference on Disarmament Issues in a different Japanese city. This has provided a valuable opportunity for disarmament experts from around the world to exchange views, and enhance understanding of the importance of disarmament at a regional level. This year the Conference, in which I was also a participant, was held in Yokohama from 21 to 23 August. I believe that the extensive discussions at the Conference, with the participation of various experts, greatly increased the awareness among public citizens of disarmament and non-proliferation issues.

Madam Chair,

Since 2002, Japan has also been inviting prominent educators on disarmament and non-proliferation education to lecture in Japan. This year, we invited Mr. Zanders, director of the BioWeapons Prevention Project, who gave a lecture on the importance of biochemical weapons disarmament, which enhanced awareness of the risks of biological and chemical weapons among the general public, journalists and academia in anticipation of the upcoming BWC Review Conference.

The UN Study also encourages in paragraph 17 of its recommendations the publication of materials on disarmament and non-proliferation. Since 2002, Japan has been publishing annually its White Paper on disarmament and non-proliferation in Japanese, as well as in English from 2003. Recently we published the new English version, which I have put on the table at the back of this room for interested delegations.

Madam Chair,

Not only have we been promoting awareness among the adult population of Japan, but the youth as well. In 2005 the Ministry of Foreign Affairs set up a new website designed to improve understanding on disarmament and non-proliferation issues for primary, junior and high school students. Although it is only in Japanese, you can access the site at http://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/naruhodo/index.html.

I have also been informed there is a project currently underway to hold a Nagasaki International Film Festival on Atomic Bombs in August next year, where all kinds of motion picture arts such as films, animations and TV documentaries regarding atomic bombings from all over the world will be displayed. The UN Study also advocates in
paragraph 23 such methods for disarmament and non-proliferation education. I sincerely hope this event will be a great success.

Madam Chair,

As recommended by paragraph 28 of the UN Study, the staff colleges of Japan’s self-defense agency and National Institute for Defense Studies have their own curriculum for disarmament and non-proliferation. As part of inter-agency cooperation, Foreign Ministry officials visit those colleges and give lectures on such issues.

Japan urges the Member States, as encouraged in this year’s draft resolution on disarmament and non-proliferation education, to continue applying the recommendations of the UN study. Furthermore, as Japan has just done, the Member States, as encouraged in paragraph 33 of the recommendations, should include in their remarks to the First Committee information on the results of implementing the recommendations of the UN study.

Thank you.