Open-Ended Working Group on Taking Forward Multilateral Nuclear Disarmament Negotiations  
22, February 2016
Statement by Ambassador Toshio SANO,  
Permanent Representative of JAPAN to the Conference on Disarmament

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, let me congratulate you, Ambassador Thani, on your election as the Chairman of the OEWG. I appreciate your commitment to guide the work of the working group in an open and inclusive manner, and very much welcome a number of participation of Member States, international organizations and civil society, among others. 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 these meaningful tasks.

Mr. Chairman,

Japan aligns itself with the joint statement delivered by the Ambassador of Canada, on behalf of 17 countries, but I would like to add a couple of brief points from our national perspective:

First, since views and approaches to nuclear disarmament vary depending on the regional security environment, these approaches, measures and suggestions to be presented in the coming days should be reflected in a fair and balanced manner in the final report and recommendations.

Second, I feel very encouraged that, Mr. Chairman, you repeated in several occasions the importance of a “general agreement” in the OEWG based on OP6 of resolution 70/33. To obtain a “general agreement,” we would like to suggest participants to focus not on differences but on common ground, as much as possible, throughout the discussion of this forum.
With regard to the “agreed recommendations” in OP7, we are firmly convinced that all participants of the OEWG should make their best efforts to reach a consensus agreement, keeping in mind that this is the established practice of other nuclear disarmament fora, including the NPT.

Finally, we expect that this working group will adopt realistic, practical, and a feasible outcome, which will contribute to building momentum to multilateral disarmament machinery, including the CD, and especially the upcoming NPT Review Cycle towards 2020.

Mr. Chairman,

Regarding concrete effective legal measures, I will the join discussion at a later stage of the working group.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.