Mr. Chairman,

- My delegation first of all would like to thank the Chair to organize this panel dedicated to this important issue of transparency. Japan believes that fair and balanced discussions on all issues related to nuclear disarmament will lead to a success of this Working Group. I would also like to thank Mr. Rauf for his comprehensive and lucid reporting on the issues pertinent to this panel, especially on transparency.

- Japan has stressed “transparency” as one of the most important practical nuclear disarmament measures. During the 2015 NPT review process, the NPDI and Japan submitted joint and national working papers in this regard that contain a number of concrete proposals. At the 2015 NPT Review Conference, transparency was deemed as one of the three major issues. As Mr. Rauf alluded to in his presentation, the issue of
transparency has become a mainstream of the discourse on nuclear disarmament.

To begin with, negotiations on nuclear arsenal reductions would not be possible without baseline information on the number of existing nuclear warheads. In addition, without transparency, nuclear disarmament cannot be verified nor would States have complete confidence that nuclear disarmament measures have been accomplished in an irreversible manner. Transparency is thus the most important among the three principles of nuclear disarmament as it underpins other two principles, namely, verifiability and irreversibility. Therefore, Japan believes that all nuclear-weapon States should at least provide a baseline of the numbers of nuclear warheads, against which disarmament measures can be concretely reviewed within the process of the NPT review cycle.

Furthermore, increased transparency alleviates mistrust among States and is indispensable as a confidence-building measure and as a basis for a stable international and regional security environment. In other words, the
lack of transparency on nuclear weapons, in particular in case the strengthening of nuclear forces were implemented without transparency, would destabilize the regional situation as anxiety and mistrust would be amplified.

- In this context, Japan has advocated establishing a reporting mechanism as a concrete measure aimed at enhancing transparency. The action plan of the 2010 NPT Review Conference refers to “regular reports” as well as “standard reporting form”.

The NPDI proposed a standard reporting form in its working paper submitted in 2012, which includes reporting on the quantity, the types and the status of warheads and their delivery systems; and the quantity of fissile material produced for military purposes in the past and the current status. The proposed form also includes reporting on qualitative measures such as the measures taken to diminish the role and significance of nuclear weapons in military and security concepts, doctrines and policies.
Let me ask two questions. First, “Reporting Fatigue”. We should continue to encourage NWS to continue to enhance transparency. Second, Mr. Rauf showed a very interesting matrix of the States’ disclosure status. Unfortunately, red (non-transparent) and yellow (not enough) are still predominant in some States. We believe we should continue to encourage NWS, turn as many red and yellow to green. I want to ask the panelist about his views in this regard.

At the 2015 Review Conference, Japan submitted a working paper in its national capacity, proposing a plan aimed at institutionalizing a reporting mechanism as follows; agreement on a standard reporting form by the 2017 PrepCom, reporting by nuclear-weapon States at the 2018 PrepCom, special session devoted to review the said reports at the 2019 PrepCom, and decision on further steps at the 2020 RevCon. Japan believes this proposal enjoyed a wide and general support at the 2015 RevCon.

In this regard, Japan also believes that nuclear-weapon States should continue to make regular reports within the framework of the NPT review process, at least on the basis of the 2010 NPT Action Plan. The reports should contain to the greatest extent possible numerical information on
nuclear holdings such as the total number of nuclear warheads in possession and the number of deployed/non-deployed warheads, which would provide a baseline against which the implementation of nuclear disarmament by nuclear-weapon States could be reviewed. My delegation hopes that above-mentioned views of Japan will be reflected in the report and recommendations of this Working Group.

Thank you.