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Conference in 2005
At the Plenary Meeting of Main Committee III

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Madam Chair,

Let me begin by congratulating you on your assumption to the Chair of Main Committee III. We trust that your experience and skillful guidance will facilitate constructive discussion and contribute to bringing this Committee to a fruitful outcome. My delegation will spare no efforts in co-operating with you in the discharge of your important duties.

(Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy and Japan’s policy)

Madam Chair,

The peaceful uses of nuclear energy is one of the three main pillars of the NPT, together with the prevention of proliferation of nuclear weapons, and the pursuit of nuclear disarmament. To slight any one of these three pillars would seriously jeopardize the credibility of the entire non-proliferation regime. In this context, the peaceful uses of nuclear energy by a non-nuclear-weapon State should not be unduly affected as long as it carries out its nuclear activities with the confidence of the international community by faithfully fulfilling its NPT obligations and by ensuring high transparency.

Recognizing the invaluable benefits of nuclear energy and the scarcity of nuclear resources, the Japanese Government has established a policy of nuclear fuel cycle, whereby plutonium and other materials recovered by reprocessing spent fuel are reused to secure a steady long-term source of energy. Japan believes that recycling limited nuclear resources will contribute to securing a stable supply of nuclear energy, while Japan reassures that the amount of plutonium Japan possesses does not and will not exceed the necessary level for a rational and logical plan for its peaceful uses. This has been stipulated in Japan’s nuclear energy policy document called the “Long-Term Program for Research, Development and Utilization of Nuclear Energy”.

(Nuclear Safety and Security)
Madam Chair,

The peaceful uses of nuclear energy includes not only electric power generation but also the application of nuclear technology in such fields as human health, agriculture, industry and so on. It has become indispensable in our daily life. In order to ensure benefits brought by the peaceful uses of nuclear energy for present and future generations, the need for nuclear safety cannot be over-emphasized. One effective means to further enhance the level of safety among member states is the peer review mechanism pursuant to the Convention on Nuclear Safety. Recognizing its value, Japan has been participating actively in this process with other like-minded contracting parties.

It is equally important for the sustenance of nuclear activities for peaceful uses to take protective measures against nuclear terrorism, particularly after the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001. In this connection, we welcome the recent adoption by consensus of the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism at the United Nations General Assembly. We also welcome an enhanced momentum to amend the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material to expand its scope from international transport to inland transport, usage, storage, and nuclear facilities themselves. Japan calls upon all States Parties to this Convention to participate in the IAEA Conference of Non-Proliferators scheduled to take place this July with a view to successfully concluding the negotiations. My Government also appreciates the efforts made by the IAEA in formulating the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources as well as the Guidance on the Import and Export of Radioactive Sources with a view to tightening control over radioactive sources and avoiding their diversion to "dirty bomb".

(Transport of Radioactive Materials)
Madam Chair,

Considering the uneven geographical distribution of resources in
the world and specific technology possessed by a limited number of
countries, transport of radioactive materials is an essential element to
reap the benefits from peaceful uses of nuclear energy. In this
connection, ensuring the safe and smooth transport of radioactive
materials is important for all countries that support the peaceful uses
of nuclear energy.

The maritime transport of radioactive materials to and from
Japan is carried out in accordance with the principles of international
law, including maritime navigational rights and freedoms as provided
for in international law. It has been conducted in a thoroughly safe
manner over the past thirty years, in strict conformity with
international standards, such as the IAEA’s regulations for the safe
transport of radioactive material and those of IMO. In this
connection, Japan has requested that the IAEA organize a Transport
Safety Appraisal Service (TransSAS) mission this fiscal year, with a
view to conducting an objective assessment on Japan’s national
regulations of transport safety. Japan also attaches great importance
to transparency and has, to the extent possible, provided information,
regarding its maritime transport, on a voluntary basis, to relevant
coastal states, fully taking into account, among other things, the
requirements of physical protection. Japan has been making and will
make every effort for enhancing understanding of coastal states on
maritime transport. Japan hopes that an informal discussion on
communication between shipping States and relevant coastal States
will serve to that end.

(Multilateral Approaches to Nuclear Fuel Cycle: MNA)
Malam Chair,

Japan shares the view that the international nuclear
non-proliferation regime needs to be urgently strengthened in order to
maintain and improve the peace and stability of the international
community. A strengthened regime is also vital for improving the
security environment of Japan, which is directly faced with the threats
posed by the nuclear programs of the DPRK. With regard to
Multilateral Approaches to the Nuclear Fuel Cycle (MNA), Japan appreciates the intensive efforts made by the International Expert Group to produce a report on this issue.

The report on the MNA, in order to maintain this momentum, suggests five possible approaches and recommends that attention be given to them by the IAEA Member States, by the IAEA itself, by the nuclear industry and by other nuclear organizations. Japan strongly believes that if further consideration is to be given by the international community to this issue, the following points, which were not sufficiently discussed by the International Expert Group, partly due to its limited mandate, should be fully discussed.

First, careful examination is necessary on how the MNA can contribute to strengthening the international nuclear non-proliferation regime. In particular, it is necessary for us to examine very thoroughly whether and how the MNA will actually contribute to solving the issues of countries that have already violated their international obligations on non-proliferation, or of countries of proliferation concern.

Second, it is also important to examine whether the MNA will not unduly affect the peaceful uses of nuclear energy by a non-nuclear-weapon State that carries out nuclear activities with the confidence of the international community by faithfully fulfilling its NPT obligations and by ensuring high transparency of its nuclear activities. The MNA should not affect the peaceful uses of nuclear energy by such a non-nuclear-weapon State, particularly when the State has ratified and is fully implementing both its comprehensive safeguards agreement and additional protocol, and, as a result, has been accorded a conclusion from the IAEA Secretariat that there has been no indication of diversion of declared nuclear material placed under safeguards or of undeclared nuclear material and activities for the State as a whole.

Finally, more study needs to be done on how the MNA can
actually guarantee supply of nuclear fuel and services, given the fact that the supply of nuclear fuel and services can be easily affected by the international political situation and is therefore unpredictable by nature. Of particular importance is the issue of how the IAEA could be an effective guarantor of nuclear fuel and services under such circumstances.

Japan strongly believes that if the international community agrees to continue the discussion on the MNA, the above-mentioned points should be addressed and thoroughly examined.

In this connection, with regard to a voluntary time-limited moratorium on new fuel cycle facilities that Dr. Mohamed ElBaradei, Director-General of the IAEA, referred to in his statement at the opening session of the Conference, Japan is of the view that it is not an appropriate approach. While it is unrealistic to ensure the participation of all the states including states with proliferation concern in a moratorium and therefore it would not work in a way that contributes to strengthening the international non-proliferation regime, it is more likely to hamper the nuclear activities for peaceful uses based on a long-term program.

(Technical Cooperation)
Madam Chair,

The promotion of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy through technical cooperation is an important responsibility of the States Parties to the NPT. We recognize the important role played by technical cooperation activities through the IAEA’s Technical Cooperation Program. The IAEA activities, not only in the field of nuclear power, but also in broader fields such as water, health, agriculture and industrial applications, will contribute to sustainable development. From this viewpoint, Japan will continue to take an active part in the international cooperation in the peaceful use of nuclear energy through various schemes, including the Regional Cooperative Agreement for Asia and the Pacific (RCA) as well as the
Forum for Nuclear Cooperation in Asia (FNCA).

Madam Chair,

Attaching great importance to the technical cooperation program, Japan has consistently fully paid its share of the IAEA Technical Cooperation Fund and achieved a 100% "Rate of Attainment" since its foundation in 1959. Japan's contribution to the fund, in effect, represents more than one fifth of the total Technical Cooperation Fund. We believe that all Member States should make every effort to contribute their full TCF target shares, on the basis of shared responsibility. We also encourage the IAEA to manage and implement the Technical Cooperation program with utmost efficiency and effectiveness in meeting the expectations of Member States.

(Withdrawal)

Madam Chair,

Lastly, we should also agree during the Review Conference on measures to make withdrawal from the NPT by any Party more costly without amending Article X of the Treaty. For instance, the Conference may reaffirm that a State Party who has withdrawn from the Treaty remains responsible for any violations it committed while being a Party. Japan also believes it important that State Parties should urge any supplier country of nuclear material, facilities and equipment, to make the necessary arrangements so that any nuclear material, facilities and equipment transferred prior to their withdrawal from NPT has to be returned or neutralized.

(Concluding Remarks)

Madam Chair,

Japan has benefited from a wide range of peaceful uses of nuclear energy under the most strict IAEA safeguards. I should like to reiterate that the peaceful uses of nuclear energy must be carried out with the confidence of the international community by faithfully
fulfilling NPT obligations with a high level of transparency and international confidence. Japan will continue to support the activities of the IAEA based on these considerations.

Thank you, Madam Chair.