Statement by Ambassador Nobuyasu ABE
Representative of Japan
to the NPT Review Conference in 2010,
at the Plenary Meeting of Main Committee II

10 MAY 2010, NEW YORK
Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished delegates,

First of all, on behalf of the Government of Japan, I would like to congratulate you, Ambassador Yel’chenko, on your assumption of the Chairmanship of Main Committee II.

Mr. Chairman,

Since the last Review Conference, the NPT regime has been faced with serious challenges that have the potential to undermine our confidence in the NPT. In particular, the unsatisfactory progress in nuclear disarmament and the lack of progress in the establishment of a WMD free-zone in the Middle East pose serious problems for maintaining confidence in the NPT. At the same time, technological advancements and the so-called “nuclear renaissance” seem to present both opportunity and the risk of proliferation, thus generating renewed urgency to strengthen the NPT regime.

Having said that, Mr. Chairman, the recent political impetus created by positive statements and concrete measures in nuclear disarmament gives us hope that this Conference can serve as a milestone to restart our concerted efforts towards achieving a world without nuclear weapons and promoting the peaceful use of nuclear energy by recovering the balance among the three pillars of the NPT. To this end, we must do our best to overcome the intractable differences among us that have made some of the past Conferences unsuccessful, so that we may convey to all people around the world a strong message that the NPT is viable and effective in securing international peace and security.

Mr. Chairman,

I would like to share with you and our distinguished colleagues Japan’s views on the issues that I believe must be addressed in this Committee. Among many important issues that deserve attention, I would like to concentrate on several to which many of our colleagues may also attach special importance, namely: the enhancement of IAEA safeguards and other non-proliferation issues; nuclear-weapon-free zones and the Resolution on the Middle East; the DPRK and Iran; and strengthening of the review process.

(Safeguards)
Mr. Chairman,

Faced with the current challenges to our non-proliferation efforts, it is extremely important for us to strengthen the international non-proliferation regime, including the NPT, through enhanced and more effective IAEA safeguards. The details of our position on safeguards
are described in Japan’s working paper on strengthening the International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards, which is co-sponsored by 14 countries, namely, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, the Republic of Korea, Singapore and Uruguay. It has also been quite positively evaluated by several other countries. Here I would like to introduce the gist of Japan’s views for better understanding.

First, we welcome the fact that, as of this moment, 165 States have concluded comprehensive safeguards agreements and 99 States have concluded the Additional Protocols. The Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement and the Additional Protocol, based on the Model Additional Protocol, are now recognized as an integral part of the IAEA’s safeguards system and the safeguards standard of the NPT, as required by article III, paragraph 1 of the Treaty.

In particular, I would like to emphasize that implementation of the Additional Protocol is the most practical and effective means for strengthening the international nuclear non-proliferation regime. Japan believes that the conclusion and implementation of the Additional Protocol will increase the confidence of the entire international community regarding the absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities in the States concerned, thus serving as a factor that facilitates the peaceful use of nuclear energy rather than as a factor restricting it.

Japan again urges all States that have not yet concluded either a Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement or an Additional Protocol to do so as soon as possible, and calls upon States concerned to conduct further work for the universalization of the Additional Protocol, by providing, for example, technical assistance to the States that require it.

Second, Japan welcomes the fact that integrated safeguards are being applied in 43 out of 99 States that have concluded the Additional Protocol, contributing to more effective and efficient implementation of IAEA safeguards.

Third, we consider it especially important to provide developing countries with assistance for the establishment and maintenance of State systems of accounting for and control of nuclear material (SSAC), so that those countries can steadily implement safeguards and develop their peaceful nuclear activities without proliferation concerns.

(Export Control & UNSCR 1540)
Mr. Chairman,

There can be no doubt that the full application of the IAEA safeguards, together with effective export control and full implementation of UNSCR 1540, will assist the robust implementation of nuclear non-proliferation measures.
It is important for each State to strictly control nuclear-related materials, equipment and technology in order to prevent WMD proliferation and nuclear terrorism. For many years, Japan has been making efforts to strengthen such controls and has provided concerned countries with technical assistance, while carrying out educational activities. Japan will continue to contribute to enhancement of and capacity-building for export controls for the entire international community through such assistance.

The implementation of UN Security Council resolution 1540 by all States is also crucial to preventing nuclear proliferation to terrorists and other non-state actors, and thus supports the NPT regime. Japan will remain active in providing assistance for the implementation of this resolution.

(Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones and Resolution on the Middle East)

Mr. Chairman,

Along with the strengthening of the IAEA safeguards system and other non-proliferation measures, the issues of nuclear-weapon-free zones and the Resolution on the Middle East are of particular interest for many of us.

We welcome the entry into force of the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia and the Treaty of Pelindaba. Japan will pay close attention to the efforts for effective implementation of these Treaties and the consultations of parties to these Treaties with nuclear-weapon States, as necessary.

The Resolution on the Middle East was an essential element of the outcome of the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference. Japan fully supports this Resolution, and stands ready to work with all interested parties to take practical steps towards implementing the Resolution in its entirety.

The establishment of a Middle East zone free of weapons of mass destruction, nuclear, chemical and biological, and their delivery systems will require the adherence by all States in the region to the NPT, the BWC and the CWC. Adherence to the CTBT by these States would greatly contribute to achieving this goal. Japan will make further efforts for early entry into force of the CTBT. At the same time Japan calls upon Israel to accede to the NPT as a non-nuclear-weapon State and calls upon all the Middle East states to participate in the disarmament and non-proliferation regimes, including the CTBT, the BWC and the CWC.

(The DPRK)

Mr. Chairman,
The problem of the nuclear threat in the Northeast Asia region is no less important than the issue of the Resolution on Middle East. In the five years since the previous Review Conference, the DPRK twice announced that it had conducted nuclear tests. The DPRK also announced that it had successfully completed the reprocessing of its spent fuel rods to extract plutonium and successfully conducted experimental uranium enrichment to enter into the completion phase. In spite of calls by the international community, the DPRK has not yet retracted its announcement of withdrawal from the NPT. The DPRK activities constitute a serious threat to the entire international non-proliferation regime, including the NPT, as well as to the security of the international community as a whole.

With this in mind, this Conference should send the following message to the DPRK in a decisive manner: we condemn the nuclear tests by the DPRK; the DPRK should comply with the relevant UN Security Council resolutions; the DPRK should retract its announcement of withdrawal from the NPT and come into compliance with the IAEA safeguards; and the DPRK should fulfill its commitments, including the abandonment of all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programs, in accordance with the September 2005 Joint Statement of the Six-Party Talks. It is highly important that the final document of the Conference refers to the DPRK nuclear issue so that the DPRK does not mistake the will of the States Parties.

(Iran)
Mr. Chairman,

The Iranian nuclear issue is also a matter of serious concern for Japan and other States Parties. Iran needs to earn the international community's full confidence that all of Iran's nuclear activities have been conducted for peaceful purposes only in exercising the country's right to conduct research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes based on article IV and the relevant provisions of the NPT. IAEA has reported that Iran has not provided the necessary cooperation to permit the Agency to confirm that all nuclear material in Iran is being used in peaceful activities. Japan expresses its serious concern over the fact that, while Iran's lack of cooperation leaves such issues raised by the IAEA unaddressed, Iran continues expanding its enrichment activities, contrary to the requirements of the relevant IAEA Board of Governors' resolutions and to the provisions of the relevant UN Security Council resolutions. Mindful of the deteriorating situation, Japan's basic position on this issue can be summed up as follows:

First, Japan supports a peaceful and diplomatic solution to the Iranian nuclear issue. To achieve this end, Iran should make determined efforts to restore the confidence of the international community and comply fully and without delay with its obligations under the relevant UN Security Council resolutions and the requirements of the IAEA Board of Governors.
Second, Japan supports the IAEA's impartial and professional efforts to clarify all outstanding issues relating to Iran's nuclear program. In this connection, we note that the IAEA has repeatedly pointed out that, unless Iran implements the Additional Protocols, the Agency will not be in a position to provide credible assurances about the absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities in Iran.

Third and finally, Japan believes the Conference should seriously consider how it can deliver a strong message on the Iranian nuclear issue.

(South Asia)
Mr. Chairman,

In addition to the nuclear issues of the DPRK and Iran, I wish to touch briefly upon India and Pakistan. Japan continues to urge India and Pakistan to accede to the NPT as non-nuclear-weapon States promptly and without conditions. We continue to urge India to maintain its commitment to the moratorium on nuclear tests and to sign and ratify the CTBT. We urge Pakistan as well to continue the moratorium on nuclear tests and to sign and ratify the CTBT. Japan urges Pakistan to cooperate and consult with other states actively seeking an immediate commencement of the negotiation of an FMCT. Japan encourages both States to declare a moratorium on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices pending the entry into force of an FMCT.

(Strengthening the review process)
Mr. Chairman,

We have discussed how to strengthen the review process in past Preparatory Committees. Japan recognizes the importance of this issue and became a co-sponsor of a working paper prepared under the initiative of Canada. The paper focuses on the holding of annual general conferences which would take both procedural and substantive decisions in order to make the review process more sustainable and responsive. We hope to share our insights and ideas and have in-depth discussions on this issue.

(Conclusion)
Mr. Chairman,

To conclude, on behalf of the delegation of Japan, I wish to emphasize that Japan is prepared to cooperate with you and our colleagues in reaching a meaningful agreement on the issues to be addressed in Main Committee II. We call upon all States Parties to demonstrate flexibility and to cooperate with each other towards achieving a positive outcome.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.