Statement by H.E. Mr. Akio Suda
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative of Japan to the Conference on Disarmament
at the NPT Review Conference in 2010 Meeting of Main Committee I
7 May 2010

Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished delegates,

First, allow me to congratulate you, Ambassador Chidyausiku, on your assumption of the important post of Chairman for Main Committee I. My delegation appreciated the professional manner in which you guided the Third PrepCom and we are ready to lend you our utmost support as you steer the work of this Committee.

Mr. Chairman,

The tragic experience of the Japanese people has created an unwavering resolve to realize a safe world free from nuclear weapons. This is not the wish of Japan alone. The total elimination of nuclear weapons has become a common goal shared by the whole world. Indeed, this is a main objective enshrined in the NPT. As Article VI states, all States parties, the nuclear-weapon States in particular, must make efforts towards nuclear disarmament.

Leadership by the two states that possess the largest stockpiles of nuclear weapons is important for intensifying efforts on global nuclear disarmament. And in this light, Japan welcomes the signing of the new START treaty. We highly value the new treaty, which is in line with the obligation for disarmament included in Article VI. Japan expects the early ratification of this treaty by both countries. Still, even though this treaty is a laudable
outcome, we would like to encourage the Russian Federation and the United States to pursue further efforts to reduce their arsenals, both strategic and non-strategic.

In addition to the bilateral reductions of Russia and the U.S., we commend the unilateral measures taken by France and the United Kingdom to reduce their arsenals and increase transparency. Japan would like to express its strongest desire that other states possessing nuclear weapons follow the measures these four states have taken and that the four states add more to their efforts.

Further, Japan places importance on the universalization of the NPT and calls upon the States not parties to the Treaty to accede to it as non-nuclear-weapon States without delay and without conditions.

Mr. Chairman,

This Review Conference is being held at a very opportune moment with a number of positive developments in the area of disarmament. We therefore need to build upon the past agreements and accomplishments, including those of the 1995 Review and Extension Conference and of the 2000 Review Conference, and to look to the future, setting a new path toward a world without nuclear weapons.

At this Review Conference, some countries have already put forward useful and innovative proposals to advance nuclear disarmament. Japan also, in cooperation with Australia, has submitted a joint policy proposal to this Review Conference entitled, “A New Package of Practical Nuclear Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Measures for the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons”. I am pleased to say that this package is gathering growing support of many States Parties.

In pursuing this “package proposal”, we have given serious consideration to the report issued last December by the International Commission on Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament (ICNND), which was a joint initiative of Japan and Australia.

In this new package, we propose as a first measure that the NPT States parties reaffirm the unequivocal undertaking by the nuclear-weapon States to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals leading to nuclear disarmament.
We call on all states possessing nuclear weapons to pursue negotiations on nuclear disarmament bilaterally and/or multilaterally. This is an appeal for the hitherto bilateral initiative between the Russian Federation and the United States to be expanded to involve the other states possessing nuclear weapons. Pending the conclusion of such negotiations, we also call on all the states possessing nuclear weapons to reduce their nuclear arsenals, and call on particularly those that are increasing and expanding their arsenals, to reduce or at least not to increase their arsenals.

We call on all states possessing nuclear weapons to reduce the role of nuclear weapons in their national security strategies. In this connection, we call on the nuclear-weapon States to take, as soon as possible, such measures as providing stronger negative security assurances that they will not use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States that comply with the NPT. In this context, Japan appreciates and welcomes the Nuclear Posture Review by the United States, and call on all other states possessing nuclear weapons to follow suit and make similar commitments.

We also call on all states possessing nuclear weapons to take measures to reduce the risk of their accidental or unauthorized launch.

Next, we emphasize the importance of applying the principles of irreversibility and verifiability to this process of reducing arsenals, and calls for increased transparency by all states possessing nuclear weapons with regard to their nuclear weapons capabilities. For example, they can report regularly the numbers of nuclear weapons and their delivery systems to the NPT States parties.

As another essential measure for global nuclear disarmament, the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Tests-Ban Treaty (CTBT) is of prime concern to the NPT States parties. Certainly, it was placed as step one of the 13 Practical Steps agreed to at the 2000 NPT Review Conference. Japan urges all states that have not yet done so to sign and/or ratify the CTBT at the earliest opportunity with a view to its early entry into force. Also, pending the CTBT's entry into force, the moratorium on nuclear weapons testing must be maintained.

It is extremely regrettable that despite the positive developments last year in the Conference on Disarmament, the CD remains deadlocked and negotiations on a Fissile Materials Cut-
off Treaty (FMCT) have not commenced yet. Japan calls for the immediate commencement and early conclusion of negotiations on an FMCT, while urging all states possessing nuclear weapons to declare and maintain a moratorium on the production of fissile materials for weapons purposes. Japan also urges all states possessing nuclear weapons to declare voluntarily fissile material that is no longer required for military purposes and to place such material under IAEA safeguards or other relevant international verification.

Mr. Chairman,

With the failure of the last Review Conference five years ago, a repeat would be a devastating blow to the NPT regime and a major set-back to our collective enterprise to free the world from nuclear armaments. The NPT under its provisions provides a firm basis to advance nuclear disarmament. The States parties need to recognize past agreements and to seek new measures that reflect the circumstances of today. In this regard, Japan hopes that the concrete and practical disarmament proposals that we have submitted in cooperation with Australia are taken on board and contribute to a balanced and forward looking final document.

Thank you for your attention.