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STATEMENT BY H.E. MR. SUMIO TARUI  
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TO THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

SECOND SESSION OF THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE  
FOR THE 2010 REVIEW CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE TREATY  
ON THE NON-PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS (NPT)

- CLUSTER I -

Geneva, 30 April 2008

Mr. Chairman,

The NPT regime currently faces an array of serious challenges. The NPT review process, including the present meeting, offers the States Parties with an important opportunity to overcome these challenges and render the NPT regime even stronger.

These challenges include ongoing nuclear proliferation and the risk of nuclear terrorism. DPRK's October 2006 announcement of a nuclear test in disregard of international appeals, sent an immense shockwave through the entire international community. The DPRK's nuclear issue poses a grave threat to the peace and security of East Asia and the entire international community. Regarding Iran, despite the International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA) Board of Governors' finding Iran in non-compliance with its safeguards agreement, and the repeated calls for the suspension of all enrichment-related and reprocessing activities by the UN Security Council and IAEA Board of Governors in their resolutions, Iran has continued and has recently decided to further expand enrichment activities. Moreover, there have been numerous reports that terrorist groups are seeking to acquire nuclear weapons. Should terrorists acquire a weapon, the world would be appallingly jolted.

Mr. Chairman,

In order to tackle these serious, but not exhaustive, challenges the NPT faces as illustrated by these cases, a number of nuclear non-proliferation and counter-terrorism measures must obviously be taken. For example, all non-nuclear-weapon States Parties to the NPT that have not yet concluded a comprehensive safeguards agreement are legally obliged to do so without delay. All states are also urged to conclude an IAEA additional protocol as soon as possible. The provision of highest possible standards of security for nuclear weapons as well as for nuclear materials is also essential to prevent terrorists from acquiring a bomb. More States Parties are invited to participate in the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism, announced in July 2006.

The Global Partnership against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction, which was agreed at the Kananaskis Summit in 2002, aims particularly to prevent nuclear, chemical and biological weapons or materials from falling into the hands of terrorists. Japan's cooperation programme to assist denuclearization in the Former Soviet Union States is a part of this partnership. Japan has already extended assistance to the Russian Federation by providing a floating facility for processing liquid radioactive waste. Japan is cooperating in dismantling six decommissioned nuclear submarines, two of which have already been dismantled. Also, a negotiation is ongoing to cooperate for the construction of an On-shore Storage Facility for Reactor Compartment at Razvoynik Bay. Japan has also cooperated with Ukraine, Kazakhstan and Belarus in the area of nuclear security.

In addition to these non-proliferation and counter-terrorism measures, it is essential that nuclear disarmament measures are also taken in order to tackle the current challenges. If nuclear disarmament makes tangible progress, the confidence of States Parties in the NPT, in particular, non-nuclear-weapon States, will be strengthened considerably. The entry-into-force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) would be a significant step. The nine remaining Annex II States of the CTBT should ratify as soon as possible. The Conference on Disarmament (CD) should immediately commence negotiations on a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT). While the ongoing disarmament efforts and the recent important and concrete decisions and initiatives are welcomed, the nuclear-weapon States should accelerate such nuclear disarmament measures on all types of nuclear weapons. Past outcomes, in particular the "Principles and Objectives" of the 1995 Review and Extension Conference and the Middle East Resolution, as well as the results of the 2000 Review Conference including the 13 practical steps, must be respected and implemented to their fullest extent. I will further discuss these points in the special time on nuclear disarmament and security assurances.

Mr. Chairman,

Progress on universalization would also boost confidence in the NPT, particularly to those countries in regions that contain non-NPT States Parties. We call upon the non-NPT States Parties – India, Pakistan and Israel – to accede promptly to the NPT as non-nuclear-weapon States, and conclude its the comprehensive safeguards agreement and additional protocol. Additionally, pending their accession, we also call upon them to refrain from any act that would defeat the objective and purpose of the Treaty and to take practical steps in its support, including continuation of the moratorium on nuclear testing.

Mr. Chairman,

It is high time that all the States Parties to the NPT – both nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States – come to the realization that we have no more time left to continue our political wrangling over whether disarmament or non-proliferation should come first. Instead, we all need to arrive at a mutual understanding that it is necessary to tackle both the issues of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

According to the Doomsday Clock of the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, it is now only 5 minutes to midnight. The States Parties have to seriously engage in constructive discussions with the common goal of maintaining international peace and security, and to send a strong positive message to the international community.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.