

Japan

(Please check against delivery)

STATEMENT BY H.E. MR. YOSHIKI MINE

**AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY
HEAD OF THE DELEGATION OF JAPAN
TO THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT**

ON

DISARMAMENT AND NON-PROLIFERATION EDUCATION

AT

**THE FIRST COMMITTEE
OF THE 60TH SESSION OF THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

THEMATIC DISCUSSION

New York

October 2005

Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished delegates,

(NPT Review Conference)

Building on previous working papers, Japan, together with seven other countries (Egypt, Hungary, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Poland and Sweden), submitted to the 2005 NPT Review Conference a “Working paper on disarmament and non-proliferation education” (NPT/CONF.2005/WP.30), stressing that the successful implementation of the UN study recommendations will require an active partnership among national governments, regional and international organizations, academic institutions and civil society. While extremely regrettable that the Review Conference was unable to agree on a final document on substantial matters, including disarmament and non-proliferation education, we nevertheless believe this working paper, including the concrete recommendations contained therein, can serve as a useful reference for Member States.

(Japan’s efforts)

Japan places great importance on disarmament and non-proliferation education, and we are making the following efforts, among others, in this field:

- Fellowship program

Under the UN Disarmament Fellowship Program, Japan has been inviting various government officials to visit Japan each year since 1983, amounting to a total of around 580 participants to date. This year, participants have recently completed their visit to Hiroshima and Nagasaki, which I hope helped to provide an insight into the reality of atomic bombing, and they are with us here during the First Committee session.

- UN Conference on Disarmament Issues

Japan has sponsored a UN Conference on Disarmament Issues in a different local city each year since 1989, providing a valuable opportunity for disarmament experts from around the world to exchange views, and enhancing awareness of the importance of disarmament at a regional level.

This year's Conference was held in Kyoto, from 17 to 19 August, and included a session on disarmament and non-proliferation education.

- Inviting disarmament and non-proliferation experts and *hibakusha*

Based on the recommendations from the United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education, Japan has invited disarmament and non-proliferation experts to give lectures on disarmament and non-proliferation, working with high school students, civic leaders, and atomic bomb survivors (*hibakusha*). *Hibakusha* share their experiences first hand to educate students and the public in a culture of peace by creating awareness of the devastation caused by nuclear weapons.

(The real terror of nuclear weapons)

This year marks the 60th anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Nevertheless, nuclear weapons continue to exist, and the voice of the citizens of Japan and the international community, calling for the total elimination of nuclear weapons, is stronger than ever. I feel one of the main reasons why nuclear weapons continue to exist is that the true nature of the nuclear devastation they cause is not well understood. I believe the true terror of nuclear weapons lies in the fact that the vast majority of casualties are unavoidably innocent civilians, and that the use of these weapons leads to the most horrific long-lasting, complex and inter-generational effects.

(Future efforts)

There is a pressing need to correctly relate such inhumane effects caused by nuclear weapons and, to this end, the further promotion of disarmament and non-proliferation education is essential. It is encouraging to learn that various efforts have already begun, both on a national and international level around the world, with the aim of raising public awareness of the dangers of such weapons, as well as the need for further strengthening disarmament and non-proliferation measures. We will continue to work toward this end, and Japan, as an active advocate of disarmament and non-proliferation education, would like to work with interested countries and the NGO community to consider and propose concrete measures to implement the recommendations in the UN study.

Thank you very much.