

Explanation of Vote by Japan

“Follow-up to the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice on the Legality of the Threat or Use of Nuclear Weapons” (A/C.1/63/L.19)

Thank you, Mr. Chairman

I would like to explain Japan's position on the vote on the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/63/L.19, entitled “Follow-up to the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice on the Legality of the Threat or Use of Nuclear Weapons”. We highly appreciate Malaysia's sincere attitude and firm commitment to the goal of achieving nuclear disarmament, which led to the proposing of draft resolution L.19.

Japan also believes that, because of their immense power to cause destruction and death and injury to human beings, the use of nuclear weapons is clearly contrary to the fundamental humanitarianism which provides the philosophical foundation of international law. Therefore, we would like to stress that nuclear weapons should never be used again, and continuous efforts should be made towards achieving a world free of nuclear weapons.

However, the advisory opinion of the ICJ, which this draft resolution addressed, clearly demonstrates the complexity of the subject.

Japan supports the unanimous opinion of the judge of the ICJ on the existing obligations under international law to pursue nuclear disarmament and to conclude negotiations on the matter in good faith. Japan firmly believes that we must take concrete measures to achieve steady, step-by-step progress in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

In this context, we believe it is premature to “call upon all the states immediately to fulfill that obligation by commencing multilateral negotiations leading to an early conclusion of a nuclear weapons convention prohibiting the development, production, testing, deployment, stockpiling, transfer, threat or use of nuclear weapons.”

We believe that such steady, incremental progress should be made prior to our embarking upon the negotiations which resolution L.19 calls upon all states to commence. This is the reason for Japan’s abstention on this draft resolution.