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HEAD OF THE DELEGATION OF JAPAN  
TO THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT  
AT THE FIRST COMMITTEE OF THE 63<sup>RD</sup> SESSION  
OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
GENERAL DEBATE

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Firstly, allow me to express my congratulations to you, Ambassador Suazo, on your assumption of the chair of the First Committee. I am confident that with the benefit of your wealth of diplomatic experience and skill, you will be able to steer us smoothly through this session's deliberations. I assure you of my delegation's full support as you carry out this vital task.

Mr. Chairman,

After nearly two decades since the end of the Cold War, uncertainties in some areas unfortunately seem to be growing. In this light, we must realize that the field of disarmament and non-proliferation is no exception to this trend. For instance, the nuclear issues of the DPRK and Iran still remain unresolved, and all relevant Security Council resolutions on both issues should be implemented without delay. In addition, the lack of transparency in nuclear forces is also a source of anxiety in certain regions.

Against this backdrop, Japan reaffirms its firm determination to continue to play a leading role in promoting disarmament and non-proliferation. As a nation that has dedicated itself to peace after World War II, Japan exerts strenuous efforts to promote disarmament and non-proliferation through peaceful coexistence. Japan is the only nation that has suffered from atomic bombings, and has set as its basic national policy three non-nuclear principles of not possessing, not producing, and not permitting

the introduction of nuclear weapons into its territory. Accordingly, Japan has tasked itself with the mission and responsibility to strongly appeal to the world that the devastation caused by nuclear weapons should never be revisited and to lead the international community in its endeavor to achieve our common objective of a world free of nuclear weapons. Faced with the ups and downs in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation, Japan therefore spares no effort to maximize positive developments and minimize the risks of negative trends.

Mr. Chairman,

Japan has taken a strong leadership role in disarmament and non-proliferation, particularly this year. At this year's G8 Hokkaido Toyako Summit, upon Japan's initiative as the President, the Leaders' Declaration of the G8, which includes four nuclear-weapon States among its members, for the first time in history contained a paragraph on nuclear disarmament.

In July, the Prime Ministers of Japan and Australia agreed on the establishment of the International Commission on Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament (ICNND), with the first meeting to be held on 19-21 October in Sydney. The co-chairs, Ms. Yoriko Kawaguchi, former foreign minister of Japan and Mr. Gareth Evans, former foreign minister of Australia have accelerated their preparations for the 1<sup>st</sup> meeting.

At this 63rd Session of the First Committee, Japan will once again submit two important resolutions: one on nuclear disarmament and the other on small arms and light weapons (SALW). This nuclear disarmament resolution, which is one amongst several other such resolutions, every year garners the highest number of supporting votes at the General Assembly, last year reaching 170, the highest ever. The SALW resolution, prepared in cooperation with Colombia and South Africa, lays the foundation on which the Member States can exchange their views and act to implement the UN Programme of Action (PoA). We strongly hope that the UN Member States will once again express their continuous support for these resolutions.

Mr. Chairman,

Against the wishes of the people of the world, disarmament still continues to stagnate. The Comprehensive-Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) has not entered into

force since its adoption more than ten years ago. The Conference on Disarmament (CD) has not entered into negotiations on a disarmament treaty for essentially more than a decade. In particular, the negotiations on a Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty (FMCT) have yet to start, even though the resolution recommending its negotiation was adopted by consensus at the UN General Assembly in 1993. Despite the many challenges facing the NPT regime and the failure of the 2005 NPT Review Conference, the convergence of views among the States Parties remains distant.

Nevertheless, at the same time, we can see a light shining through this dark situation. It was encouraging that the 4<sup>th</sup> CTBT ministerial meeting recently held in New York ended successfully with high level attendance. The six Presidents of the CD have produced a draft programme of work (CD/1840), which commands near consensus, and the review process for the 2010 NPT Review Conference has started successfully. It is thus high time that the political leaders of the international community strongly express their political commitment to disarmament. In particular, the leaders should show their political will towards nuclear disarmament by setting the goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world.

We should therefore prepare the way for the leaders to demonstrate this aforementioned political will. The January 2007 and 2008 *Wall Street Journal* articles by the group of four former prominent US public officials, including former US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, have built international momentum in this direction. This year's First Committee can also play a crucial role to this end. The Japanese and Australian initiative to launch the International Commission on Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament is also intended to pave the way for such political commitments by leaders. The Commission, which is mainly comprised of former high-level political decision makers, plans to make practical and realistic recommendations for achieving nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, upon which the political leaders can then draw.

This political will has to be shown by all members of the international community, be it a nuclear-weapon State or non-nuclear-weapon State, on the three aspects of nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. In particular, the nuclear-weapon States should take further practical and effective measures towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons. In this context, I would like to remind that the Leaders' Declaration of the G8 Hokkaido

Toyako Summit called upon all nuclear-weapon States to undertake the reduction of nuclear weapons in a transparent manner. It is also important that the negotiations on a legally-binding successor framework to the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) should come to an outcome before START ceases to be in effect. The commitment to the goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world will contribute to the strengthening of the international efforts to combat proliferation and terrorism.

Non-nuclear-weapon States should also commit themselves to their non-proliferation obligations and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Furthermore, it is also important that India should observe the commitments they made in conjunction with the recent Nuclear Supplier Group (NSG) decision. Japan made a difficult decision from a wider standpoint in joining the consensus.

Japan, with the benefit of the expertise and enthusiasm of civil society as well as in cooperation with other countries, will make its utmost efforts to forge the political will towards a nuclear-weapon-free world.

Mr. Chairman,

I would now like to turn briefly to the issue of conventional weapons. With regards to small arms and light weapons, I would like to recall that this year's Biennial Meeting of States (BMS) concluded successfully. In this connection, Japan, in cooperation with Colombia and South Africa, plans to submit a draft resolution in the interest of following up the accomplishments of the BMS in the General Assembly and developing a mid and long-term vision for the work related to the implementation of the PoA.

Moreover, to address the humanitarian concerns caused by cluster munitions, Japan has been actively participating in international discussions, including those held within the Oslo Process. Japan welcomes the adoption of the Convention on Cluster Munitions at the Dublin Diplomatic Conference in May this year and is currently considering concrete measures to take in order to sign the Convention. In parallel with this work, Japan continues to contribute to the negotiations to establish a legally binding instrument within the framework of the CCW, which engages the major producer and possessor countries of cluster munitions.

On the issue of an Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), the Group of Governmental Experts concluded that further consideration is required on this topic, and efforts are already underway to work towards a global treaty. This momentum needs to be accelerated and further deliberations should be carried out with the widest possible participation of UN Member States, while encouraging the implementation of the recommendations contained in the GGE Report.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion, allow me to say that we should all do our best to work together to show the political will necessary to further the cause of disarmament and non-proliferation. I would also like to stress the importance of the significant role played by civil society. I believe that, under your effective leadership, this First Committee will surely bear fruit to this end.

Thank you.