

Japan, 6 Feb 67

Madame President,
Distinguished delegates,

As the only nation to have experienced the devastation of nuclear attack, Japan has placed its greatest importance on nuclear disarmament. The position of the Japanese Government is clearly reflected in its annual sponsorship of the UN resolution "Renewed determination towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons", which was adopted by 167 countries last year.

Madame President,

Each of the parties to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (the NPT) are encouraged under article VI to take further steps leading to nuclear disarmament, including deeper cuts in all types of nuclear weapons. In this connection, Japan welcomes the steady progress made by the Russian Federation and the United States, as well as other nuclear weapon states, on the achievement of this goal. However, while an estimated 27,000 nuclear weapons still remain in existence, the necessity for greater, tangible efforts to reduce the number of weapons appears obvious. We urge both the Russian Federation and the United States to fully implement the Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty (the Moscow Treaty), and to undertake cutbacks, irreversibly and verifiably, beyond those provided for in the Treaty. In this light, we are paying close attention to the bilateral talks between the Russian Federation and the United States on the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START). Also, it is imperative that these efforts to reduce nuclear arms proceed transparently. Japan in this regard welcomed the detailed presentations made in the CD last year by the Russian Federation, the United States and other nuclear weapon states, on their nuclear disarmament efforts. We hope all the nuclear weapon states make specific presentations on their additional progress towards nuclear disarmament during this year's discussions.

The nuclear-weapon states should also further reduce the operational status of nuclear weapon systems in ways that promote international stability and security. Diminishing the role of nuclear weapons in security policies is essential to minimizing the risk that these weapons will ever be used, and facilitates the process of their total elimination.

Madame President,

The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty in recent years has faced a number of serious challenges, nevertheless, the significance of the NPT as the cornerstone of the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime remains unchanged. In order to guide the 2010 NPT Review Conference to a successful outcome, it is critical that this year's first preparatory meeting is constructive. We would also

like to take the opportunity within this particular CD session to reiterate the importance of universalizing the NPT. We strongly urge those countries not party to the Treaty to accede to it as non-nuclear weapon states without delay or preconditions.

Furthermore, the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) is crucial as a step towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons. Those countries that have yet to sign or ratify the Treaty should do so at the earliest possible date, and until the CTBT enters into force, we call for the continued observance of the moratorium on nuclear test explosions. In September last year Japan in conjunction with Australia, Canada, Finland and the Netherlands convened a CTBT Friends Foreign Minister Meeting in New York. The endorsement of that meeting's Joint Ministerial Statement by 70 countries proves the steadfast support for the CTBT. Additionally, in January this year the Japanese Government invited from Colombia, which has yet to ratify the CTBT, a delegation from the Colombian Senate Foreign Affairs Committee, including its chairperson. During their visit, the Colombian delegation conducted talks with Japanese officials associated with the CTBT and toured monitoring facilities. This visit was very significant since Columbia's political will to overcome the issue of ratification was confirmed. With a view towards the 5th "Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the CTBT" in September this year, Japan is maintaining the momentum for the Treaty's early entry into force, and taking every opportunity to encourage the countries that have yet to ratify it.

From the perspective of promoting these aforesaid disarmament efforts, Japan along with the international community strongly condemns the nuclear test proclaimed by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on 9 October 2006.

Madame President,

The Cooperative Threat Reduction Programme and the G8 Global Partnership against the spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction are also of continued significance to the promotion of nuclear disarmament, along with non-proliferation. Within the framework of the G8 Global Partnership Japan assisted the Russian Government to dismantle a decommissioned nuclear submarine in the Russian Far East. Subsequently, Japan and Russia have signed an agreement to dismantle an additional five submarines.

Madame President,

At this stage I would like to briefly focus our attention on the subject of disarmament and non-proliferation education. As part of our long term efforts toward nuclear disarmament, Japan has attached great importance to disarmament

and non-proliferation education. Based on the 2002 "UN Study on Disarmament and Non-proliferation Education" Japan has been engaged in various activities, for instance, publishing "Japan's Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Policy" handbook; holding seminars on disarmament education; and hosting disarmament educators, as well as the UN Disarmament Fellowship Programme. Under the Disarmament Fellowship Programme we have invited more than 620 young diplomats from around the world to visit Japan. We encourage each country to continue its own efforts in disarmament education. Furthermore, Japan highly values the work of civil society in disarmament and non-proliferation education and intends to continue its close cooperation with their activities.

Madame President,

Finally, I would like to re-emphasize my delegation's conviction that the main priority of the CD this year is the immediate commencement of negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty (an FMCT), since presently it is the most realistic multilateral nuclear disarmament measure. It has been argued, both inside and outside this Conference, that an FMCT that does not cover existing stocks is merely a non-proliferation measure. In order to eliminate nuclear weapons, however, it is absolutely imperative that we end their production and halt the nuclear arms race. Moreover, while the CTBT institutes a qualitative cap, an FMCT will institute a quantitative cap to the production of nuclear weapons. Thus, an FMCT is primarily a measure for nuclear disarmament.

Thank you, Madame President.
