

STATEMENT BY H.E. Mr. ONISHI Yohei,
Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan
2026 High Level Segment of the Conference on Disarmament

Mr. President,

At the outset, I would like to express my sincere appreciation, and my country's support, to you, Mr. President of the Conference on Disarmament (CD), as well as to the Secretary-General and the Secretariat, for your continued dedication and tireless efforts.

Last year marked the 80th year since the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Many people from around the world, from political leaders to young people, visited Hiroshima and Nagasaki and witnessed the realities of the atomic bombings firsthand. Survivors, as well as their second- and third-generation descendants, have also shared their testimonies outside Japan. I would like to express my gratitude for the strong interest shown by the international community in the realities of the atomic bombings. I also wish to take this opportunity to pay tribute to the governments, international organizations, academic institutions, and civil societies that have worked to preserve and pass on the testimonies and memories of those affected by the use and testing of nuclear weapons, across generations and national boundaries.

This year, we will hold the 11th Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). In order to make progress, even incrementally, toward a world without nuclear weapons, we must work to maintain and strengthen the NPT, the cornerstone of these efforts. To pass on an enduring nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime to future generations, it is essential that we steadily advance initiatives with a view to the next decade and beyond. In this regard, the Review Conference must above all reaffirm States Parties' commitment to the NPT. Furthermore, North Korea's nuclear and missile development poses a serious challenge to the integrity and credibility of the NPT. Japan remains committed to actively contributing to the dialogue and discussions at the Review Conference.

Mr. President,

As the international community is becoming increasingly divided and more confrontational, we face an extremely severe international security environment.

The opaque expansion of nuclear capabilities continues, including in Japan's neighboring region. Recently, at the CD, the United States proposed initiating dialogue on arms control following the expiration of the New START. Japan believes that efforts on disarmament and arms control involving the United States, Russia, and China are of critical importance, and we welcome the United States' intention to reestablish an arms control framework that reflects the current challenging security environment.

Furthermore, I would like to once again emphasize the urgent need to revitalize existing disarmament machinery. We regret that consensus has not yet been reached on a Decision on the Work at this year's CD. Japan appreciates the efforts made by all concerned and hopes that substantive discussions will deepen in the period ahead.

Mr. President,

Japan reiterates the importance of the early commencement of negotiations on a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT). We must break the current stalemate surrounding the FMCT without further delay. The Shannon Mandate provides a common foundation upon which we can consolidate our collective wisdom, and Japan will continue its efforts to build political momentum toward the start of FMCT negotiations. Pending the treaty's entry into force, we also call upon all relevant States to declare or maintain moratoria on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons.

This year marks the 30th anniversary of the opening for signature of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), which was negotiated at this Conference. Japan remains firmly committed to its early entry into force. We call upon all remaining States that have not yet done so, including States whose ratification is necessary for its entry into force, to sign and ratify the Treaty without delay. In addition, prior to the CTBT's entry into force, we urge all relevant States to declare or maintain moratoria on nuclear test explosions.

Enhancing transparency contributes to progress in nuclear disarmament and arms control by building mutual confidence among States, particularly in today's challenging security environment. We hope that a shared understanding of transparency as a foundation for nuclear disarmament and arms control will further develop.

Mr. President,

Concerning the military use of emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence, it is necessary to fully understand both the risks and benefits and to consider them comprehensively, taking into account humanitarian considerations as well as security perspectives. In this regard, Japan strongly supports advancing discussions on lethal autonomous weapon systems within the framework of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW). We also hope that the international community will deepen its understanding of the responsible use of AI in the military domain.

Furthermore, as outer space becomes increasingly congested due to technological advances and the diversification of its use, it is essential to develop a common understanding of responsible behavior in outer space to ensure its sustainable and stable use.

At a time when technological innovation continues to advance amid a challenging security environment, there has never been a greater need for the CD—the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating body—to move forward by building upon its accumulated body of discussions. Japan will continue to cooperate fully to ensure that the CD fulfills its mandate.

Thank you for your attention.

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