Statement by Ambassador Tomoyuki YOSHIDA
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At the High-level Meeting to Commemorate and Promote
The International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons
26 September 2018

Mr. President,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me first to extend our appreciation to convene the high-level meeting to commemorate and promote the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons.

The international community shares the common goal to eliminate nuclear weapons towards “a safer world free of nuclear weapons”. During the past 73 years, no nuclear weapon has been used since the atomic bombings in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Approximately 85% of nuclear weapons have been reduced from its peak. However we must not forget that there remain approximately 15,000 nuclear warheads worldwide. Threats of nuclear weapons still exist and the security environment is deteriorating and requires further efforts.

Today, an interactive discussion among states has become more indispensable than never before in order to narrow differences of views and seek common ground for further concrete steps for reduction and elimination of nuclear weapons. All States, including nuclear weapon States in particular, are encouraged to discuss and improve understanding about transparency, verification, threat and risk reduction, security concerns raised during the nuclear disarmament process, as well as the relationship between security
and disarmament. We believe that these measures represent clear opportunities for advancing nuclear disarmament through cooperation and collaboration with all states. Furthermore, they serve as confidence-building measures and as a basis for a stable international and regional security environment.

Along with nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation is also essential. Japan reaffirms our commitment to the goal of achieving complete, verifiable and irreversible dismantlement (CVID) of all of the North Korea’s nuclear weapons, existing nuclear programs, and related facilities as well as all types of weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles in accordance with relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions. Mindful of recent developments including the U.S-North Korea summit in Singapore in June as well as three Inter-Korean Summits, and Japan calls on the North Korea to take concrete steps towards denuclearization. We also call on all members states to fully implement the relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions.

As the only country to have ever experienced atomic bombings during war, Japan has been engaged in building practical and concrete measures on the basis of cooperation between nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear weapon States, which could be based upon a clear recognition of the humanitarian aspects of the use of nuclear weapons and an objective assessment of the severe international security environment. In this regard, I would like to reiterate my respect towards the longstanding effort by Hibakusya, and civil society, who are tirelessly conveying to the world the reality of the atomic bombing.

Let me conclude my remarks by ensuring Japan’s commitments to actively working for a world free of nuclear weapons.

Thank you,