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Keynote Speech

The Role of Parliaments in Promoting a World without Nuclear Weapons

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(Introduction)

It is my great pleasure and honor as a Japanese parliamentarian and as Deputy Director-General of the International Bureau of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party, and also as former Ambassador to the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, to participate in the workings of the International Commission on Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament (ICNND) and to deliver a statement at its Northeast Asia Regional Meeting. I would like to add my voice to many others around the world congratulating the initiatives taken by the Co-chairs of the International Commission, Mme. Yoriko Kawaguchi, former Foreign Minister of Japan, and Mr. Gareth Evans, former Foreign Minister of Australia.

I would also like to congratulate the Chinese organizers of this conference for their vision and commitment. Over recent years, Japan and China have steadily developed what we call a strategic win-win relationship, whereby we take future-oriented proactive initiatives to enhance our bilateral relations and stability, and provide for pragmatic solutions where needed. Also in international relations, both China and Japan share faith in multilateralism and in the future of multilateral arrangements and institutions. Both of us are patient players of multilateral

diplomacy in disarmament and non-proliferation. In Northeast Asia, China has served as a profound focal point in hosting and managing the six-party talks, which have provided the region with an innovative and holistic process towards meeting the core security challenges including the verifiable and peaceful denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

(New momentum)

We are particularly fortunate to hold this meeting at a time when foresighted, strong political will and momentum for nuclear disarmament has emerged. We are encouraged by the landmark remarks of President Barack Obama on April 5, 2009 in the Czech Republic's capital Prague. He said, "I state clearly and with conviction America's commitment to seek the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons." He also said, "the Cold War has disappeared but thousands of those weapons have not." And that, "to put an end to Cold War thinking, we will reduce the role of nuclear weapons in our national security strategy." As a parliamentarian, I represent the voice of millions of Japanese voters as I congratulate him for his courage and vision.

Accordingly, a new negotiation process between the US and Russia was launched in Moscow in April with a view to concluding a successor treaty to START I, and the second round of their negotiations coincides with the timing of our meeting in Beijing. As clearly stated by Japan's Foreign Minister Mr. Yasuhiro Nakasone, in his illuminating speech on 27 April entitled "Conditions towards Zero—11 Benchmarks for Global Nuclear Disarmament," the US and Russia are expected to "lead the world toward a new security order by holding comprehensive bilateral strategic dialogues to conclude a successor treaty to START I at an early date, further reduce nuclear warheads, build mutual confidence regarding missile defense and strengthen the framework for controlling nuclear weapons and material."

(CD and FMCT)

We also see signs of strong political will from the UN headquarters and Geneva. On 19 May the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, addressed the Conference on Disarmament, which was also attended by Foreign Minister Mr. Mourad Medelci of Algeria, whose permanent representative serves as current President of the Conference on Disarmament, and Mme. Calmy-Rey, Foreign Minister of Switzerland. Mr. Ban Ki-moon gave his assessment of the recent NPT Preparatory Committee in New York and said, "Most recently, the Third

Preparatory Committee of the 2010 NPT Review Conference concluded its session in a refreshingly positive tone, marking a distinct shift from previous years.” He correctly pointed out, “There are now a number of initiatives from nuclear and non-nuclear States that together provide a new momentum for disarmament. They point the way to move from the divisions and paralysis of the past towards genuine dialogue and progress. These signs of greater political will represent an opportunity we cannot afford to miss.”

During this 1135<sup>th</sup> Plenary of the Conference on Disarmament, the President of the Conference circulated a draft decision for the establishment of a Programme of Work for the 2009 session. As we are all aware, the Conference on Disarmament is expected to commence negotiations on a Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty immediately. One important feature of the draft decision is that it supplements the mandate for negotiation of this treaty with provision for “international and effective verification.” The draft decision also provides for the creation of Working Groups to discuss effective negative security assurances, progressive and systematic efforts to reduce nuclear weapons, and all issues related to the prevention of an arms race in space. It seems that disarmament ambassadors in Geneva finally have before them a draft decision that can achieve consensus and addresses all politically sensitive issues as well as procedural issues. I take this opportunity to speak in Beijing at a crucial moment in the crafting of a new nuclear disarmament treaty and urge Member States of the Conference on Disarmament to adopt the Presidential draft decision immediately. As the Secretary-General of the United Nations pointed out, “we cannot afford to miss” this opportunity.

Given all these and other related signs of proactive political will, it is my hope that the work of this International Commission serves as a useful catalyst for change and as an engine for empowerment of disarmament communities.

(The role of parliamentarians)

Behind the signs of greater political will is most certainly a strong wish of the people, as represented by actions taken by parliamentarians in their respective countries. I am here today to share with this distinguished group of experts my view of the importance of political will generated and accelerated by parliamentarians acting either in their individual capacity or through joint efforts.

Parliamentarians and political parties around the world can play key roles in uniting

behind a shared vision of a safer world, and providing governments with the courage for bold action to make this a reality. Needless to say, parliamentarians representing the sovereign will of the people ratify treaties, enact domestic laws where necessary to implement treaty obligations, and also collaborate with experts and civil society in awareness-raising campaigns toward ratification and signature of relevant treaties. Together with political support groups, parliamentarians articulate future steps for promoting disarmament and non-proliferation. They are in a position to help mobilize the necessary moral and financial support for disarmament diplomacy in general and for specific actions associated with treaty obligations. They monitor closely national implementation of treaties and resolutions, and hold government leaders accountable for their commitments.

They also try to make sure that treaties and their implementation processes respond to realistic needs of our current international community by calling attention to the importance of international cooperation, surveillance schemes and humanitarian assistance, among other things. Given the increasing attention of the public to international security and disarmament matters, it has become even more important for parliamentarians and political parties today to be mindful of citizens' expectations for international peace and security, and translate their expectations to concrete achievements in disarmament.

(Parliamentarian League)

In discharging such responsibilities, parliamentarians often make use of bipartisan or cross-party parliamentarian leagues. Allow me at this point to state in some detail how parliamentarians and political parties of Japan have strived to mainstream the cause of and action for nuclear disarmament. In the case of Japan, a cross-party Parliamentarian League of International Disarmament Promotion was established more than a quarter of a century ago, and is currently headed by Mr. Yohei Kono, Speaker of the House of Representatives. Since it is extremely rare for the Speaker of the lower house to represent a single-issue parliamentarian league, it is indicative of the strong political will of our people and of political parties to single out disarmament and non-proliferation as our uncompromising priority. I currently serve as Acting Secretary-General of the League, and the Board members not only include parliamentarians of the LDP and the Komei Party of the ruling coalition, but also of the Social Democratic Party, the Communist Party of Japan, and others, in addition to the largest opposition party, the DPJ. We hold regular meetings to persuade relevant ministries of our country to take proactive measures in

disarmament matters, and engage in international and inter-parliamentary exchanges and joint actions, where possible. We also work with civil society organizations and media in advocacy and awareness-raising. We are also associated with organizations like the PNND, the Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament.

(Parliamentary debate on Three Non-Nuclear Principles)

Aside from regular activities as the cross-party League on disarmament affairs, each member of the League, in different capacities and opportunities, bears the mission, as a parliamentarian of the only country to have experienced the devastation of atomic bombings, to promote the cause of nuclear disarmament. Each harbors a solemn, enduring, and powerful sense of mission that crosses party lines to carry on the message of the victims or *hibakusha* of Hiroshima and Nagasaki that the horrors brought upon them should never be repeated

Allow me to look back at the time line and provide an example of how parliamentarians in the past strived for a cause in the most decisive and definitive ways. One of the most vivid examples can be seen in the work of the House of the Representatives more than 40 years ago when Japan's "Three Non-Nuclear Principles" was first debated. In 1967, at a leading committee in the House of Representatives, namely the Budget Committee, the serving President of the Socialist Party of Japan tirelessly questioned the position of the government on nuclear weapons issues. In responding to this persistent parliamentary debate, the serving Prime Minister Eisaku Sato, who later became a Nobel prize laureate, stated as follows: "My responsibility is to achieve and maintain safety in Japan under the Three Non-Nuclear Principles of not possessing, not producing and not permitting the introduction of nuclear weapons, in line with Japan's Peace Constitution." This statement on the floor of the Budget Committee of the lower house became the first statement in history of the Three Non-Nuclear Principles. Since then, the Japanese government has maintained these principles, and the public and political parties irrespective of ideologies have continued to cherish this national premise as coined in parliamentary debates nearly half a century ago.

(G8 Speakers Meeting in Hiroshima)

Another outstanding example of a parliamentarian doing his part to mainstream the cause of a nuclear-free world is Japan's current Speaker of the House of Representatives, Yohei Kono, who hosted the G8 Speakers' Meeting in Hiroshima

following the G8 Hokkaido Toyako Summit last year. After giving a lot of thought on where to hold the meeting, he stated as follows: “As the speaker of this year’s host nation, my hope was that the G8 players would gather in Hiroshima to discuss the theme of Nuclear Disarmament .... For years I have considered it our crucial responsibility for the future of humanity to convey to the international community the tragedies of Hiroshima on August 6 and of Nagasaki on August 9, 1945. ”

Speaker Kono’s bold initiative was echoed by the courageous decision of the US House speaker, who accepted the invitation of her parliamentary counterpart to visit Hiroshima, where no high-ranking incumbent American official had yet come since the nuclear bombing. US House Speaker Mme. Nancy Pelosi traveled to Hiroshima to participate in a Group of Eight lower house chiefs’ meeting and offered flowers at a monument to atomic-bomb victims. The Democrat, who stands behind only the Vice President in the line of succession to the US Presidency, became the highest-ranking serving American official to visit Hiroshima in half a century.

Within the same political party, her ground breaking visit to Hiroshima might have had a facilitating influence on the newly elected Democratic President Obama, when he said in Prague on 5 April, “Just as we stood for freedom in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, we must stand together for the right of people everywhere to live free from fear in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. And as a nuclear power, as the only nuclear power to have used a nuclear weapon, the United States has a moral responsibility to act. We cannot succeed in this endeavor alone, but we can lead it, we can start it.” Courageous parliamentarians like these can, with unfailing shrewdness concerning the window of opportunity for peace, make a profound difference by pushing governments over the threshold for change.

(Political parties and Congress of nuclear-weapon states)

In the case of nuclear-weapon states, the latitude for political parties and Congress to promote practical measures for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation is immense. For example, the US Congress prevented specific nuclear weapons development projects from progressing and supported non-proliferation projects in fiscal year 2008. The Democrat-controlled Congress refused to finance the Reliable Replacement Warhead (RRW), and instead called for a study to evaluate the existing Stockpile Life Extension Program.

The Congress also provided \$24 million, namely 33% more than the Bush

Administration requested, to the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO), and \$48 million for Nuclear Weapons Storage Security, which was twice the amount requested by the Administration. Also, \$53 million was provided for energy assistance to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in order to support negotiations for denuclearization of the Korean peninsula.

Government leaders often benefit from years of active experience in Parliament. The ice-breaking President Obama is a fine case in point. In August 2007, Senators Barack Obama, a Democrat from Illinois, and Chuck Hagel, a Republican from Nebraska, introduced into the Senate the Nuclear Weapons Threat Reduction Act of 2007, which made an ambitious call for specific nuclear disarmament. This bi-partisan initiative called for deeper reductions in nuclear forces, taking existing nuclear forces off alert status, maintaining a moratorium on nuclear testing, concluding a verified fissile material treaty, and creating an international nuclear fuel bank to prevent the development of proliferation-sensitive technologies around the world. The list served as the basis of the agenda set forth when the Senator became President of the US.

Members of the European Parliament have also made efforts to call for European initiatives towards nuclear disarmament. In April 2007, our Co-chair Mr. Gareth Evans facilitated a high-level conference to unite members of the European Parliament from across the political spectrum and address nuclear dangers, which included action on nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament.

(The way ahead)

In conclusion, allow me to communicate to the participants of this meeting the expectations of Japanese voters and taxpayers concerning nuclear disarmament challenges. The Japanese public holds strong feelings about the NPT, for it has provided us with a reliable security environment throughout the most difficult days of power battles among nations. As an exemplar non-nuclear weapon state, Japan has done everything it can to strengthen the NPT regime. Japan has been in compliance with the highest level of IAEA safeguards, and Japan is promoting the universalization of the Comprehensive Safeguards Agreements and the Model Additional Protocol, and urges nuclear-weapon states to comply with the NPT Article VI disarmament obligations. Japan hopes and believes that the 2010 NPT Review Conference will serve as a significant milestone to uphold and revitalize the non-proliferation regime.

The Japanese public welcomes the Obama Administration's positive stance toward the ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), expects US Senators to unify beyond party lines to ratify the Treaty, and calls for a moratorium on nuclear tests pending the entry into force of the CTBT. Banning the production of fissile material for weapons purposes is, as already stated, a major concern as well. The Japanese public is also deeply concerned about delivery systems, and supports restrictions on ballistic missiles capable of delivering a nuclear warhead.

(World bank for nuclear fuel)

Promoting peaceful use of nuclear energy is Japan's priority because of our scarcity of energy and natural resources. As we promote peaceful and commercial use of fissile materials, it is of utmost importance to provide for measures to secure nuclear non-proliferation, prevent nuclear terrorism, and ensure the safety of nuclear energy and related facilities. Solutions to promoting peaceful uses of nuclear energy and minimizing the risk of proliferation of fissile materials at the same time might be found in multilateral approaches to the nuclear fuel cycle. Multiple options could be examined in order to avoid unlimited development of sovereign nuclear fuel cycles by developing international and regional mechanisms whereby assurances of supply and services of nuclear fuel will be provided to States whose government had in turn agreed to forego building its own capacity.

Assurances of supply and services could take the form of fuel leasing and fuel take-back offers. It would have to include effective back-up sources of supply in the event that a supplier is unable to provide the nuclear fuel material or services. A kind of intergovernmental fuel bank could be established to alleviate unexpected cases, such as excessive shortage of supplies, denial of services for political reasons, and so on. The front end of the nuclear fuel cycle is uranium enrichment, and the back end of the cycle is reprocessing of nuclear spent fuel. Designing a comprehensive and useful world fuel bank that functions as an anchor or guarantor of arrangements is a new challenge for nuclear non-proliferation professionals in an era when many nations seek peaceful uses of fissile materials, and the theft of nuclear materials by non-states could become the greatest unknown security threat to all nation-states.