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STATEMENT BY H.E. MR. SUMIO TARUI
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TO THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

SECOND SESSION OF THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE
FOR THE 2010 REVIEW CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE TREATY
ON THE NON-PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS (NPT)

- SPECIFIC ISSUE : -
NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT & SECURITY ASSURANCES

Geneva, 2 May 2008
Mr. Chairman,

In the Cluster 1 debates, I noted in my statement the challenges to the NPT regime, and expressed the necessity of tackling both the issues of nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation. During this Special Time on nuclear disarmament and security assurances, I will be discussing measures that the international community should be implementing toward the total elimination of nuclear weapons. Additionally, I will be also presenting Japan’s national position on security assurances.

Mr. Chairman,

Japan has already submitted a working paper that comprehensively sets out concrete measures for nuclear disarmament, taking into account ongoing disarmament efforts by nuclear-weapon States and inspired by several notable proposals for pursuing new nuclear disarmament initiatives.

Firstly, further reduction of nuclear weapons with transparency by all the nuclear-weapon States. Significant reductions of nuclear weapons are being undertaken by nuclear-weapon States. Recently, the French government announced an initiative that would draw down its nuclear arsenal to fewer than 300 warheads by reducing its air-launched nuclear weapons, missiles and aircraft by one-third. The United States also announced a further reduction of approximately 15 percent in its overall stockpile to be achieved by 2012. In addition, the U.S. and the Russian Federation have stated that they have been implementing the Moscow Treaty, and agreed to develop a legally binding arrangement succeeding START I. The United Kingdom has provided an explanation on its efforts to reduce its stockpile of operationally available warheads to fewer than 160.

Moreover, they are carrying out these reductions in nuclear weapons with transparency. Transparency in nuclear disarmament efforts builds confidence between the non-nuclear-weapon States and the nuclear-weapon States, and strengthens nuclear non-proliferation, as acknowledged in the “13 practical steps”. Welcoming all these ongoing disarmament efforts, we call upon all the nuclear-weapon States to undertake such reductions of nuclear arsenals with transparency. We also cite concrete examples of such transparency within their working papers. For instance, we believe all nuclear-weapon States should advance nuclear disarmament transparently on such things as the aggregate number of nuclear warheads possessed and/or operationally deployed, the
number of warheads reduced and dismantled, plans for reducing and dismantling warheads, years in which the production of fissile materials for nuclear weapon purposes ceased, and the amount of fissile materials declared excess for military use. From this perspective, it is worthwhile noting that the recent announcement by France of a total stockpile reduction below 300 warheads is the first case of such a declaration among the nuclear-weapon States. I would also like to stress the importance of irreversibility. The principle of irreversibility to apply to nuclear disarmament was agreed as one of the practical steps at the 2000 NPT Review Conference. In this context, I would like to recall that some of the nuclear-weapon States have taken exemplary measures such as dismantling nuclear warheads and delivery systems, dismantling nuclear testing sites, and shutting down and dismantling its facilities for production of fissile materials for explosive purposes.

Next, I would like to touch upon the urgent need of the early entry-into-force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). Japan has been actively working to encourage the countries that have yet to ratify the Treaty. Notably, as a result of Colombia’s ratification of the CTBT, the number of Annex 2 countries which have not yet ratified the Treaty has now entered single digits, with only nine countries remaining. We again strongly urge the countries that have yet to sign and/or ratify the Treaty, especially the nine Annex 2 countries, to do so without delay. In addition, pending the entry-into-force of the CTBT, it is crucial for the nuclear-weapon States and States that are not party to the NPT to respect the moratorium on nuclear test explosions. Efforts towards establishing a test ban verification regime, including the International Monitoring System (IMS), which proved its effectiveness on the occasion of the DPRK’s October 2006 nuclear test, is also important.

A treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices (FMCT), which will serve as the quantitative cap to nuclear weapons, is a vital nuclear disarmament measure. Commencing negotiations on an FMCT without further delay is imperative. I would like to point out that no delegation of the Conference on Disarmament (CD) has expressed opposition to negotiations on the prohibition of production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, notwithstanding differences over the modality and the scope of such negotiations. Currently, in the CD a draft decision by the 2008 Presidents of the Conference (CD/1840) is under consideration. Japan strongly calls for the efforts of the CD Member States to agree upon a programme of work and the commencement of negotiations on an FMCT.
Mr. Chairman,

On signing the NPT in 1970, Japan emphasized in its official statement that, "the nuclear-weapon States must not have recourse to use of nuclear weapons or threaten to use such weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States." That position remains unchanged, and Japan lends its basic support to the concept of negative security assurances (NSAs).

The reaffirmation by all the nuclear-weapon States in this year's CD discussions of the provision of NSAs to the levels set in UN Security Council Resolution 984 should be appreciated.

Furthermore, since none of the nuclear-weapon States have opposed the idea of providing NSAs via regional nuclear-weapon-free zone agreements, it is important as a practical and realistic step to ensure the effectiveness of nuclear-weapon-free zones and take action for the entry-into-force of existing zones. The current efforts towards the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones should proceed and be realized through the necessary consultations with the nuclear-weapon States, as stipulated in the 1999 UN Disarmament Commission Guidelines. Japan is closely and intently following the developments associated with these efforts.

The Treaty of Pelindaba is moving steadily toward entry-into-force with new acceding states. Japan welcomes this positive development. We also welcome the submission and adoption last year of "the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon Free Zone Resolution" for the first time in the UN General Assembly. We hope that the parties will report on the progress made based on the Action Plan agreed to at the Bangkok Treaty Committee meeting last year, which includes the continuation of consultations seeking the accession of all the nuclear-weapon States. Moreover, concerning the Central Asia nuclear weapon free zone treaty, Japan is paying close attention to the course of discussions between the nuclear-weapon States and the Central Asian countries. We encourage all parties involved to provide information on any developments in these consultations.

I thank you Mr. Chairman.