

## **Japan's Assistance for the Dismantlement of the Decommissioned Nuclear Submarines and Related Project in the Russia Far East**

*Hajime Sasaki, Secretary General of the Technical Secretariat of the Committee on Cooperation to assist the Destruction of Nuclear Weapons Reduced in the Russian Federation, Japan*

Mr. Chairman,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentleman,

My name is Sasaki, Secretary General of the Technical Secretariat which was established by the bilateral agreement between the Government of Japan and the Government of Russian Federation.

I appreciate your kind invitation to this Meeting. It is the first time to attend CEG Meeting held in Europe, but it is my great pleasure to have an opportunity to introduce our current cooperation in the dismantlement of nuclear submarines and related project in the Russian Far East.

Our memory is still very fresh that the first workshop on the nuclear legacy issues in the Russian Far East organized by the executives of the CEG Secretariat and Russian Government was held in Vladivostok from 23 to 25 May, 2007. The Workshop held in Vladivostok was very appropriate and indeed very timely undertaking in providing more clear pictures on the current activities in the Far East for European participants, in particular, and encouraging the other donors to participate in our joint endeavors in the Far East. Due to the importance of Workshop, the Japan-Russia Committee made the vital financial contribution to the holding of the Conference.

The Japanese cooperation on the safe elimination of nuclear weapons started from Munich Summit held in 1992, when G7 leaders agreed to provide assistance for the safe dismantlement of nuclear weapons in the former Soviet countries and the settlement of the related environmental problems. Based on the agreement in the said Summit, Japan concluded the bilateral agreement concerning the cooperation to assist the destruction of nuclear weapons reduced in the Russian Federation and the establishment of a committee for this cooperation with the Government of Russian Federation on 13 October, 1993.

Our concrete cooperation to Russia under the said Agreement stemmed with the provision of the treatment facility of low-level liquid radioactive waste named "Suzuran". Because of the incident that Russian Navy dumped radioactive wastes into the Sea of Japan, Japan decided to provide the treatment facility for the preservation of environment of the Sea of Japan, and the project was completed in November 2001. "Suzuran" is capable of processing 7,000 cubic meters of liquid radioactive waste per year, which received high commendation from European experts who participated in the CEG Workshop held in Vladivostok in May. To my knowledge, not even a drop of liquid radioactive waste has been dumped after the providing of "Suzuran". Therefore, we are much confident that our cooperation has been very successful.

Dismantlement of decommissioned nuclear submarines is enumerated as one of the priority

areas in the "G8 Global Partnership against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction" adopted at the Kananaskis Summit, 2002 and our program is implemented as part of this Partnership. The priority to the dismantlement of decommissioned nuclear submarines was also agreed in "Japan-Russia Action Plan" which was agreed by the then Prime Minister Koizumi and President Putin in January 2003. As a pilot project, we started to tackle with the dismantlement of a Victor-III class nuclear submarine, and the project was successfully completed in December 2004.

And then, on the occasion of President Putin's Visit to Tokyo in November 2005, an Implementing Arrangement for the additional dismantlement of five submarines was concluded. Within the frameworks of this Arrangement, dismantlement work of one Victor-I class nuclear submarine in the Zvezda Shipyard is now completed. This project is funded not only by Japan but also by Australia and Republic of Korea. Taking this opportunity, we would like to express our renewed respect to their insight of both Governments.

The remnant four submarines are three Victor-III class and one Charlie-I class submarines. With regard to the three Victor-III class nuclear submarines, on the occasion of visit of Mr. Sekiguchi, Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan, to Vladivostok, on August 2, 2007, I signed the Financial Contract with the Mr. Lysenko, Director of DalRAO, and he also signed the Work Contract with the Director of Zvezda Shipyard, Mr. Shulgan. The first of these three submarines is already moored at the wharf of Bolshoi Kamen Harbour.

In the Russian Far East, there are two damaged submarines left behind in the Pavlovsk Bay, because of their reactor accidents in the Chazhma Bay and the Pavlovsk Bay in 1985. Our sincere hope is that dismantling works of the three Victor-III class nuclear submarines will be conducted smoothly and safely, paying the utmost attention to safety of works, during the removal of spent nuclear fuels and disposal of liquid and solid radioactive wastes, in particular.

One Charlie-I class submarine moored in Kamchatka is scheduled to be dismantled at the North Eastern Regional Center. We have already conducted field survey and we are now preparing the final report of feasibility study. And, in parallel, we already initiated our consultations with the Russian side on the Financial and Work Contracts on the Project.

Another project in the Far East is the construction of the on-shore storage facility for reactor compartment units which are currently under waterborne storage at the Razboynik Bay. Japan decided to provide a floating dock, two cranes and a tug boat to this facility, and we are now engaged in consultations with Russian authorities on the implementing arrangement for the Project. Because of possible seawater corrosion, natural disaster including earthquake and tsunami, and for the prevention of terrorism, etc., it is extremely important to store the reactor compartment units in the on-shore facility. From this point of view, Japan decided to render assistance to this important project.

In the Far East region, there are two main centers for the dismantlement work, the Zvezda Shipyard in the neighborhood of Vladivostok and the North Eastern Regional Centre in Kamchatka. They are about 2,400 kilometers apart.

In addition, a substantial number of the nuclear submarines waiting for dismantlement in the Far East are located in Kamchatka. Furthermore, capabilities of the North Eastern Regional

Centre for defuelling and dismantling submarines and handling radioactive wastes are limited in comparison with the Zvezda Shipyard. These elements are some of the backgrounds which could affect the smooth dismantlement of submarines in the Far East. Moreover, Vladivostok and Mayak are about 7,500 kilometers apart. And for transportation of the spent nuclear fuels, the rehabilitation of the some railway tracks and bridges seem indispensable to support the weight of heavily-loaded trains with spent nuclear fuels.

Thus, dismantlement of nuclear submarines in the Russian Far East is different from that of the Northwest Russia, where dismantlement sites are concentrated in Murmansk and Arkhangelsk areas.

In addition, there are differences of frameworks for cooperation, numbers of donors and amount of funds available, etc. in two regions.

Take frameworks of cooperation, for example. In the Northwest region of Russia, the Framework Agreement on a Multilateral Nuclear Environmental Programme in the Russian Federation (MNEPR) and Protocol on Claims, Legal Proceedings and Indemnification to the Agreement was signed on May 2003 among the western donors and the Russian Federation. In addition, there exist the Northern Dimension Environmental Partnership (NDEP) and other regional cooperative frameworks. Furthermore, many European countries joined the cooperation in the dismantlement of nuclear submarines in the North West.

In this regard, it is indeed good news to hear the intention of Canada to join the dismantlement of nuclear submarines and related project in the Far East from 2008 and we would like to extend our heartfelt welcome.

In the Far Eastern region, the Japan-Russia framework for dismantlement of nuclear submarines is a sole framework for cooperation, and there does not exist any multilateral cooperative scheme in the Far East. It is our sincere hope that understanding on the current situations in the Russian Far East are deepened through discussions in the CEG meeting, as well as the Workshop held in Vladivostok in May. And we are of the opinion that it is important to establish a framework of cooperation, in which many countries can participate in our important activities as donors.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

About a month ago, on 6 and 9 August, the City of Hiroshima and Nagasaki marked their 62nd anniversary of atomic bombings. The incident occurred 62 years ago, but even today many people are suffering from leukemia, thyroid cancers, etc.. Japan is the only country in the history of mankind to have ever suffered the devastation of atomic bombings. The People of Japan earnestly wish that they be the last ones to suffer from damage and tragedy caused by an atomic bombings and nuclear weapons.

Our cooperation to assist the dismantlement of decommissioned nuclear submarines and related project in Russia is a realistic and incremental approach for disarmament and non-proliferation and the preservation of environment of the Sea of Japan. Hoping our cooperation to Russia will greatly contribute to our joint endeavors, I close my remarks.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.