

**Statement by the Head of the Japanese Delegation,
State Minister of Cabinet Office Hiroataka Ishihara,
to the 60th IAEA General Conference
September 26, 2016**

Mr. President,
Mr. Director General,
Distinguished guests,

Let me first congratulate you, Ambassador OTHMAN, on your election as the President of the 60th IAEA General Conference. I would also like to welcome Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and the Islamic Republic of The Gambia as new members of the IAEA.

For the past sixty years, the IAEA has supported the NPT regime by promoting peaceful uses of nuclear energy and working to secure nuclear non-proliferation. Under Director General Yukiya Amano's strong leadership, the Agency has played a critical role in monitoring and verifying the implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, addressing North Korea's nuclear tests and development, and advancing development goals through various initiatives, notably "Atoms for Peace and Development." In order to continue these efforts, the Government of Japan supports the re-election of Mr. Amano as the Director General of the IAEA. We call on all Member States to support his re-election so that the IAEA Secretariat may carry out its important mission to the fullest extent, united under his leadership.

Mr. President,

Nuclear energy is an important base-load power source in terms of stable supply, economic efficiency and greenhouse gas reduction, as long as its safety is ensured. The Government of Japan plans to restart nuclear reactors that satisfy the new regulatory requirements established after the accident at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station, while working to achieve understanding with the host municipalities.

Japan firmly maintains the principle of not possessing plutonium without specific purposes. In this regard, Japan will steadily utilize its plutonium in light water reactors under rigorous IAEA Safeguards, including the Ikata Nuclear Power Plant

Unit 3, which restarted this August. In accordance with this principle, Japan is making additional efforts to further increase transparency and confidence in its plutonium use, including measures such as the annual publication of “The Status Report of Plutonium Management” and the May 2016 legislation aimed at reinforcing governance of reprocessing projects.

Mr. President,

More than five and a half years have passed since the Great East Japan Earthquake in March 2011. Steady progress is being made in the decommissioning process and contaminated water management at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station, while decontamination and environmental remediation are moving forward and the evacuation zones are growing smaller.

In April this year, with support from the IAEA, Japan organized the 1st International Forum on the Decommissioning of the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station. We will continue to move forward with the decommissioning and contaminated water management in a transparent manner visible to the world, and will also share with the international community the lessons learned from this accident. We are also making ongoing efforts to ensure the safety of food produced in Japan. Recognizing that many countries have already lifted restrictions on food imports from Japan, we encourage the international community to implement import policies based on scientific evidence.

Mr. President,

Achieving and maintaining a high level of nuclear safety worldwide is a never-ending challenge.

In January, Japan received the IAEA Integrated Regulatory Review Service mission. We are currently following up on the mission’s recommendations and suggestions.

We also appreciate the Member States’ efforts to improve nuclear safety in accordance with the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety. Japan is ready to support the IAEA’s ongoing work in analyzing observations and lessons from the implementation of the Action Plan, as well as in identifying priorities for the Agency’s program.

As international nuclear cooperation continues to expand worldwide, multilateral legal frameworks are becoming increasingly important. Japan calls for enhanced communication among the Contracting Parties of conventions related to nuclear safety as well as for the efficient implementation of said conventions. We also urge all countries to join an international nuclear liability instrument. Another priority is ensuring safety in international nuclear cooperation. Japan calls upon all stakeholders, including those exporting and importing nuclear power plants, to give due consideration to nuclear safety. Japan will continue to support the IAEA in assisting with infrastructure development in countries introducing nuclear power, developing human resources, promoting public communication, and building capacities in radiation safety and emergency preparedness and response. Japan reiterates its intention to contribute to global safety through further technological development.

Mr. President,

Japan commends the IAEA's contribution to global socio-economic development in areas such as human health, food and agriculture, and water resource management based on its unique expertise. We hope that the IAEA will utilize its comparative advantage to help achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

In August, the Sixth Tokyo International Conference on African Development adopted the Nairobi Implementation Plan advocating the IAEA's efforts to tackle communicable and non-communicable diseases. IAEA's technical cooperation activities are highly valued, and we believe they can be even more effective by strengthening partnerships with international development organizations and non-governmental organizations.

Japan has been a proud supporter of the IAEA's technical cooperation programs. In 2015, Japan pledged 25 million US dollars over a five-year period to the IAEA's Peaceful Uses Initiative. Our contributions are helping to fund a wide range of projects, including the Renovation of the Nuclear Applications Laboratories and projects aimed at combating the Zika virus outbreak. Additionally, we give priority to sharing expertise and capacity building.

Let me also emphasize Japan's focus on research and development, especially in cutting-edge nuclear fusion energy, and quantum and radiation technology. Our

commitment to these areas is demonstrated by the launch of the National Institutes for Quantum and Radiological Science and Technology this past April, as well as our hosting the IAEA Fusion Energy Conference in Kyoto in October. We will continue to promote international cooperation in research and development and peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and help build the next generation of experts through the Japan-led Forum for Nuclear Cooperation in Asia and other international frameworks.

Mr. President,

Nuclear security is one of the most critical challenges requiring international attention. With the conclusion of the Nuclear Security Summit in April, the IAEA will now take on the central role in coordinating international efforts in nuclear security. We strongly hope that the IAEA's International Conference on Nuclear Security in December will facilitate further technical discussions and lead to concrete steps in international cooperation. We also commend the IAEA's tireless work, which facilitated the entry into force of the Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material in May.

In the meantime, Japan is making its own efforts to further strengthen nuclear security. In order to minimize and appropriately manage our sensitive nuclear material, we completed in March the removal of all highly enriched uranium and separated plutonium fuels from the Fast Critical Assembly of the Japan Atomic Energy Agency, or JAEA, and announced the conversion of the Kyoto University Critical Assembly from highly enriched uranium to low-enriched uranium fuel. Additionally, this month we have formally decided to introduce a system to confirm the trustworthiness of personnel at nuclear power plants of Japan. Developing nuclear security experts is another key area. That is why the JAEA's Integrated Support Center for Nuclear Nonproliferation and Nuclear Security is playing a central role in Asia by training more than 2,700 experts over the past five years. This year, Japan is making extra efforts to lead multilateral discussions in nuclear non-proliferation by taking on the G7 Presidency and serving as Chair of the Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction. Our work will continue into the next year, when we will host the plenary meeting of the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism in June 2017.

Mr. President,

The IAEA's Safeguards system is an essential instrument to ensure nuclear non-proliferation, and Japan will continue to support the IAEA's work in order to improve its effectiveness and efficiency. We emphasize the importance of the universalization of the Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement and its Additional Protocol with the aim of strengthening the global non-proliferation regime. To that end, Japan organized an outreach event in Myanmar and supported an IAEA safeguards seminar in Niger this year. We will continue to promote non-proliferation, especially in Asia, through serving as current chair of the Asia-Pacific Safeguards Network and hosting the annual Asian Senior-level Talks on Non-Proliferation.

Mr. President,

North Korea conducted its fifth nuclear test on September 9th. Due to the country's repeated nuclear tests and launches of ballistic missiles, the entire international community now faces a threat of an altogether different dimension than anything that has transpired before. North Korea's nuclear and missile development represents a grave challenge to the international nuclear non-proliferation regime and is totally unacceptable. Japan condemns it in the strongest terms. We strongly urge North Korea to refrain from further provocations, to fully comply with the relevant UN Security Council resolutions and the 2005 Joint Statement of the Six-Party Talks, and to return to compliance with the NPT and IAEA Safeguards. In this regard, we support the IAEA's continued and full engagement in this matter.

Japan welcomes the steady implementation of the JCPOA and strongly hopes that it will continue to be fully implemented. The IAEA plays an essential role in the monitoring and verification of the JCPOA, and Japan will continue to actively support its implementation.

Mr. President,

As I stand here today, I recall Japan's responsibility as an original Member State of the IAEA that has served on its Board of Governors since the Agency's foundation. As a leading country embracing advanced nuclear technology and enjoying its benefits, we express our commitment to further promote peaceful uses of nuclear energy and to strengthen nuclear non-proliferation.

Thank you.