

*25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Semipalatinsk Nuclear Test Site Closure*  
*Statement of H.E. Mr. Kazuhiro Suzuki, Ambassador Extraordinary and*  
*Plenipotentiary of Japan to Ethiopia and Permanent Representative of Japan to the AU*

(Check against delivery)

H.E. Ambassador Smail Chergui, Commissioner for Peace and Security of the AU, H.E. Mr. Yerlik Ali, Ambassador of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Excellencies, Distinguished Participants,

I am greatly honored to participate in this memorable ceremony and have the opportunity to deliver a speech.

(Understanding of the Impact of Nuclear Weapons)

71 years ago, atomic bombings instantly took many precious lives in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Those who initially survived developed health problems and many of them lost their lives in later years. Humanitarian consequences of the atomic bombing should be deplored.

Even after that, the nuclear testing at Bikini Atoll exposed Japanese nationals to its nuclear radiation which caused their death and injury. Japan, as well as Kazakhstan, understands the reality of atomic bombings more than any other countries. Therefore, we have a duty to work toward realization of a world free of nuclear weapons.

(Japanese Policy)

It is of our view that, in order to promote nuclear disarmament, practical and concrete measures with cooperation between nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States are important. These measures should be based on two understandings, a clear understanding of the humanitarian impact of the use of nuclear weapons and objective assessment of the reality of the security situation. In order to gain the clear awareness of the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons visiting the sites of atomic bombings will particularly be conducive.

In May this year, Mr. Barak Obama, President of the United States of America, visited Hiroshima. Along with Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan, Mr. Obama sent a strong message that enhances international momentum for realizing a world free of nuclear weapons. We are fully sure

that, along with the Hiroshima Declaration issued by the G7 Foreign Minister's Meeting in April under Japanese Presidency, these messages from Hiroshima presented a great deal of hope for the people across the world.

We strongly hope these events and this memorable ceremony today, initiated by Kazakhstan, will be an opportunity for people to take a moment to stop and think about the consequences of the use of nuclear weapons. We also hope that such awareness will be widely shared. With this in mind, we would like to invite people to visit Hiroshima and Nagasaki to witness the reality of atomic bombings with their own eyes and deepen their understanding of the consequences of the use of nuclear weapons.

#### (Ban on Nuclear Testing)

Japan and Kazakhstan are working together to realize a world free of nuclear weapons. Among others, both countries are strongly committed to achieving an early entry into force of the CTBT. Since last year, Japan and Kazakhstan have served as the Co-Coordination to promote the entry into force of the treaty. Prime Minister Abe and President Nazarbayev issued joint statements twice to increase awareness of the importance of its early entry into force. Through these efforts, both countries aim to strengthen the global norm against nuclear testing and achieve its early entry into force.

This month, during the UN session, 8th "Friends of the CTBT" Ministerial Meeting is to be held. Japan, as a member country of "Friends of the CTBT," would like to call for participation of all countries to the Meeting and cooperation for its early entry into force. Furthermore, Japan calls for political statements by all nuclear-weapon States to declare their renewed commitments to moratorium on nuclear testing.

#### (Advancing Nuclear Disarmament)

In 1961 the resolution on the Denuclearization of Africa was adopted at the UN General Assembly. Since then, after witnessing that South Africa abandoned its nuclear weapons, the final draft of the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty was adopted and the treaty entered into force in 2001. These African efforts have significantly contributed to the maintenance of international peace and security in the progress of international disarmament.

As the only country to have ever suffered atomic bombings, Japan also attaches great importance to a world free of nuclear weapons. To this end, we reaffirm our determination to advance nuclear disarmament by working for practical and concrete measures with cooperation between nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States

· Lastly, let me once again congratulate, one of my best friends, H.E. Ambassador Yerlik Ali, for his remarkable leadership to make this memorable event a reality. We all know that Yerlik's family is very widely renowned for their talent for classic music. We have all been deeply moved by their piano and opera performances.

Let us hope earnestly, therefore, that Kazakhstan's genuine and sincere message for nuclear-free world will be filled in the city of Addis Ababa, and in the world, just like our diplomatic community being replete with beautiful music after Yerlik's family's classic concert.

Thank you very much for your kind attention.