



**2nd Track 1.5 Meeting for Substantive Advancement of Nuclear  
Disarmament, Government of Japan**

**Statement by Ms. Izumi Nakamitsu  
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Virtual Meeting  
9 March 2021

H.E. Mr. WASHIO, [State Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan]

H.E. Ambassador ZLAUVINEN, [President-designate of the NPT Review Conference]

Dr. AKIYAMA, [Hitotsubashi University, Japan]

Excellencies,

Distinguished experts,

Ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to begin by saying how important I think events like this are. Not only to improving prospects for success at the NPT Review Conference but also to the Treaty's enduring vitality. I congratulate the Government of Japan for initiating this innovative process to draw in diverse expertise and for convening today's meeting. And I take the opportunity to once again thank Japan for its strong support to the NPT. Across a variety of forums and formats, Japan remains a persistent voice in calling for unity and a driving force in the many initiatives that have emerged to strengthen the Treaty's implementation.

This event is welcome for both its structure and its substance.

We have an outstanding array of global experts from academia and civil society on-line. Their participation is a testimony to the continued centrality of the NPT, if you will, to international peace and security and the fulcrum of the international disarmament and non-proliferation regime.

Their combined expertise has already produced a plethora of practical proposals. These identify ways in which States Parties can address the many challenges facing the Review Conference while also seeking to maximise the significant opportunities it presents.

But these good ideas will wither on the vine if they are not actively considered by policymakers.

That is why events such as this one are so valuable. They provide an environment in which officials and other stakeholders can reflect critically and move beyond the confines of often rigid national positions.

Now, turning to substance, I cannot emphasize enough how much I agree with the call by the Eminent Persons Group for dialogue, civility in discourse and respect for divergent views. As I have consistently urged, all States Parties should approach the Review Conference in a spirit of flexibility and with a willingness to engage in real dialogue in order to create an atmosphere conducive to success. Only through good faith negotiations can States Parties strengthen the Treaty and, thereby, their own security.

But preparation is important. Perhaps the single upside to emerge from this terrible pandemic is the additional time it has provided States Parties to lay the ground for the Review Conference. The more conversations we have, the more into focus the picture becomes of what success looks like and how to reach it.

I hope that States Parties will use this time to further develop points of convergence while having frank dialogue about how to overcome areas of divergence. These issues should be discussed constructively and in ways that can move them forward, as part of the full implementation of the Treaty.

I remain hopeful, for example, that the nuclear-weapon States will recall the important benefits they derive from the Treaty and demonstrate leadership in the implementation of Article VI, including by reinforcing the norm against nuclear weapons use, introducing measures to reduce the risk of nuclear war and taking practical, irreversible steps towards a world free of nuclear weapons.

When it comes to potentially divisive issues, I think there is a clear requirement for simple, pragmatic solutions. For example, regarding the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, I believe a factual recognition of its entry into force and ratification by some States Parties should be mutually acceptable.

The issue of full implementation of existing commitments undertaken at previous NPT Review Conferences has emerged as a central concern for many non-nuclear weapon States. Fulfilment by all States Parties of their commitments and obligations is essential to the effective functioning of the Treaty. I encourage States Parties to consider how to improve accountability for implementation, including through possible benchmarks such as annual reporting requirements.

Due to its verifiable non-proliferation obligations, legally binding disarmament commitments and near-universal membership, the NPT is an integral pillar of global security. To fulfil that role, the Treaty and the regime it underpins need to be fit for purpose. It is, therefore, in the collective and national security interests of all States Parties to work toward successful conclusion to the Review Conference, no matter when it is held.

All stakeholders have a role to play in this process and I look forward to hearing some innovative proposals to that end today.

I thank you very much for your attention.