Japan’s National Statement at the Washington Nuclear Security Summit

12 April 2010

1. Overview

Japan believes that it is her moral responsibility to take the non-nuclear path as the only country to have suffered from atomic bombings, and has taken the lead in the abolition of nuclear weapons while advancing the cause of nuclear disarmament and strengthening the efforts towards nuclear non-proliferation.

Moreover, Japan, as a country with few natural resources, initiated its peaceful use of nuclear power early on from the perspective of energy security. Currently, 54 nuclear reactors for power generation are in operation across Japan, accounting for approximately 30% of electricity generation. In order to guarantee the peaceful use of nuclear power, Japan has concluded a comprehensive safeguards agreement and an additional protocol with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) under which Japanese nuclear facilities are subject to the safeguards. Japan has also established a mechanism that maintains a high level of nuclear security and safety. Thus, Japan has managed to ensure the elements associated with the so-called 3S (Safeguards, Security and Safety). Furthermore, Japan has gained the trust of the international community by continuing the peaceful use of nuclear power while incorporating and maintaining the highest possible levels of transparency.

The attacks of 9/11 that took place in the United States in 2001 significantly changed the international community’s perception of the threat of terrorism. As a result, regarding the peaceful use of nuclear power, the importance of nuclear security measures, such as physical protection of nuclear material, has grown.

Amid a “nuclear renaissance,” some 60 countries are considering introducing nuclear power for the first time. Furthermore, the amount of nuclear material subject to physical protection is expected to increase remarkably as a result of future progress in nuclear disarmament. To pursue both nuclear disarmament (which involves dismantlement of nuclear weapons) and peaceful use of nuclear power, it will be important to ensure nuclear security. From this perspective, Japan strongly supports President Obama’s initiative to “secure all vulnerable nuclear materials around the world within four years,” and confirms its commitment to further strengthening nuclear security.

2. Threat of Nuclear Terrorism

Since the 9/11 terrorist attacks in the United States, the international community has made a certain level of progress in the implementation of anti-terrorism measures as a result of efforts
made by countries around the world. Meanwhile, as acts of terrorism have frequently taken place around the world, there are still strong concerns over the possibility of more terrorist attacks occurring.

In March 1995, Japan suffered a sarin gas attack on Tokyo’s subway system by the Aum Shinrikyo religious cult group which aimed to carry out indiscriminate mass murder. The attack killed 13 people and wounded about 6,300 others.

It is presumed that the purity level of the sarin that was used by Aum Shinrikyo was low by military standards and the method of use was primitive. Nonetheless, 15 years after the sarin gas attack, many people wounded by the attack are still suffering physically and mentally. While it is not easy to assess the threat of nuclear terrorism, we must take bold action with firm determination to prevent acts of nuclear terrorism and the associated damage before the threat becomes a reality, in other words, before it’s too late. It is important to keep warning about the threat of terrorism.

As activities of terrorist groups have spread across borders in recent years and in light of the unimaginable impact of an act of nuclear terrorism, it is essential for the international community to act in concert to strengthen nuclear security. In this sense, it is significant that this summit has brought together the leaders of 47 countries in a timely manner.

3. National Actions to Secure Nuclear Material

(1) Basic Concept

The responsibility for ensuring thorough control of nuclear material in a country rests primarily with the country’s national government. Particularly, the government needs to not only make clear who or which organization is responsible for the control of nuclear material but also establish the necessary infrastructures, including legislation to protect nuclear material and nuclear-related facilities and systems to secure capabilities for the accounting, control and protection of nuclear material. Moreover, it is important to regularly review the implementation of those measures in light of the progress in international efforts regarding nuclear security as well as domestic circumstances. It is also necessary to properly control radioactive material, which could be used to make a so-called dirty bomb, in accordance with a relevant code of conduct adopted by the IAEA.

Given that it is the business operators who actually undertake the physical protection of nuclear material, it is also necessary to ensure that industrial circles increase their awareness and involvement regarding the importance of nuclear security.

(2) Actions Taken by Japan

From the above-mentioned perspective, Japan has taken the following actions, among
others, in order to strengthen nuclear security, particularly since the 9/11 terrorist attacks in the United States in 2001.

(A) Strengthening of Security of Nuclear Facilities

Since the 9/11 terrorist attacks in the United States, the nuclear-related authorities and security authorities of Japan have strengthened cooperation with each other, with armed police units and patrol vessels of the Japan Coast Guard in guarding and patrolling nuclear power stations and other major nuclear facilities around the clock. In addition, Japan has conducted exercises to guard against CBRN (chemical, biological, radioactive and nuclear) terrorism.

(B) Strengthening of Protection of Nuclear Material

In order to strengthen the physical protection of nuclear material at nuclear facilities, Japan amended the Act on the Regulation of Nuclear Source Material, Nuclear Fuel Material and Reactors in 2005 so as to implement protection measures that meet the latest international standards in line with recommendations by the IAEA regarding the protection of nuclear material (INFCIRC/225/Rev.4). This amendment introduced provisions for (i) the adoption of the concept of a “Design Basis Threat” (DBT), (ii) implementation of inspections for the protection of nuclear material and (iii) confidentiality obligations for business operators and other relevant parties. Based on this law, Japan has implemented measures to protect nuclear material in Japan in accordance with the type and quantity of nuclear material held at each nuclear facility.

(C) Ratification of Nuclear Terrorism Convention (International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism)

Japan signed the Nuclear Terrorism Convention, which makes acts of nuclear terrorism a criminal offense, immediately after it was opened for signature in September 2005. In May 2007, Japan promulgated the Act on Punishment of Acts to Endanger Human Lives by Generating Radiation in order to ensure the implementation of the Nuclear Terrorism Convention, and it ratified the Convention in August of the same year.

(D) Development of Anti-Terrorism Technology

In 2007, Japan began developing technology to detect nuclear and radioactive material contained in checked baggage at airports. In the 2010 fiscal year, Japan also plans to initiate the development of a nuclear material detection device for practical application in the near future.

(E) Strengthening the Control of Radioactive Sources

In October 2009, Japan amended an ordinance of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology in order to incorporate a radioactive source registration system into the Act on Prevention of Radiation Disease Due to Radioisotopes, etc. The registration system is intended to help to identify radioactive sources that pose a high risk to human health, keep track of the ownership of such sources and detect and prevent the illicit trafficking of these sources.

(F) Conversion to Use of Low-Enriched Uranium in Research Reactors
Japan believes that replacing the use of highly-enriched uranium in research reactors with the use of low-enriched uranium will be effective in strengthening nuclear security. From this perspective, Japan has been cooperating with the United States in promoting conversion to the use of low-enriched uranium in research reactors; these efforts have resulted in significant achievements. Meanwhile, in December 2008, Japan returned the highly-enriched uranium used at Kyoto University to the United States in line with the U.S. Global Threat Reduction Initiative (GTRI).

(G) Strengthening Export Controls on Nuclear and other Radioactive Material

In order to strengthen export control on nuclear and other radioactive materials, Japan has been implementing a pilot project of the Megaports Initiative (MI), which is intended to detect radioactive material held in containers, at the Port of Yokohama.

4. International Actions to Secure Nuclear Material

(1) Basic Concept

While the responsibility for controlling nuclear material held in a country rests primarily with the country’s national government, it is important to extend cooperation to countries, upon their request, that need support in the development or improvement of nuclear security measures.

Although various significant international initiatives are already under way to strengthen nuclear security, it will be necessary in the future to implement them in a comprehensive manner while continuing to further strengthen them. To do so, Japan believes that it will be important to further international cooperation, particularly regarding the following measures, in an effective and efficient manner in cooperation with the IAEA, while avoiding overlaps and maintaining efficient coordination.

(A) Drafting of and Universal Adherence to International Rules

First, it is important to ensure the universal adoption of nuclear security-related international treaties, namely the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and the Nuclear Terrorism Convention, and of draft IAEA Nuclear Security Series and other relevant documents. Therefore, it is necessary to both request and provide the necessary support for the ratification and implementation of these treaties.

(B) Strengthening of Capacity-Building, including Human Resource Development

Second, it is necessary to promote international cooperation in capacity-building efforts, including the development of human resources necessary for ensuring nuclear security.

(C) Establishment of Networks of Experts and Working-Level Officials

Third, Japan believes it will be useful to establish regional networks that facilitate an exchange of information and the sharing of know-how and best practices. This point was
stressed at the Seminar on Strengthening Nuclear Security in Asian Countries, which was held in January 2010 under the co-sponsorship of Japan and the IAEA.

(D) Development of Leading Technologies

Last but not least, Japan stresses the importance of international cooperation in the development of leading technologies from the viewpoint of strengthening nuclear security.

(2) Efforts by Japan

Based on the above-mentioned perspective, Japan has made the following efforts to strengthen nuclear security under the framework of international cooperation.

(A) Efforts toward Universal Adoption of International Treaties

Since 2003, Japan has been holding seminars intended to encourage Asian countries to sign and ratify terrorism-related treaties, including the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and the Nuclear Terrorism Convention, almost every year.

(B) Conscientious Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1540

In order to promote the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540, Japan has been providing support for capacity-building in fields related to the resolution, such as export control, through various technical cooperation programs. In addition, at ASTOP (Asian Senior-level Talks on Non-Proliferation) and the Asian Export Control Seminar, both of which are sponsored by the Japanese Government, Japan has been calling on the participant countries to implement the resolution.

(C) Contribution to the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism (GI) as an Original Member

Since the launch of the GI in 2006, Japan has participated as an original member, contributing to an annual GI conference every year. Moreover, at seminars and on other occasions, Japan has called on other countries, mainly those in Asia, to participate in the GI.

(D) Capacity-Building and Networking in Asia and Other Regions

In 2006, Japan and the IAEA co-sponsored the Seminar on Strengthening Nuclear Security in Asian Countries, which was the first international conference on nuclear security in Asia. The second round of the seminar was held in Tokyo in January 2010, ahead of the Nuclear Security Summit.

(3) Japan’s Contributions to the Strengthening of Nuclear Security

As mentioned above, Japan has made various efforts, at the national, the regional and the global level, to strengthen nuclear security. To demonstrate its further commitment to the strengthening of nuclear security both at the regional and the global level, Japan is announcing the following initiatives at the Nuclear Security Summit:

(A) Establishment of Integrated Support Center for Strengthening of Nuclear Security
in Asia

Japan has been devoting efforts to the strengthening of nuclear security in Asian countries in particular. A document adopted at the Seminar on Strengthening Nuclear Security in Asian Countries held in January 2010 (65 participants from 18 countries) stressed the importance of regional cooperation for the strengthening of nuclear security and called for increased capacity-building efforts, including education and training.

Moreover, recognizing that nuclear security measures require sustainable implementation over the long-term, Japan will this year establish a regional center for the strengthening of nuclear security, tentatively named the “Integrated Comprehensive Support Center for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Nuclear Security for Asia” under the Japan Atomic Energy Agency (JAEA), with the aim of institutionalizing support for nuclear security on a permanent basis and contributing to strengthened nuclear security in Asia and other regions in line with opinions expressed at the aforementioned seminar in January.

Regarding Japan’s support for capacity-building efforts including education and training, which was mentioned in the Japan-U.S. Joint Statement toward a World without Nuclear Weapons, issued in November 2009, Japan will contribute to the improvement of global nuclear security in cooperation with the IAEA and the United States by implementing human resource development programs, including seminars, through the activities of this center. In addition, Japan would like to make further efforts to spread its know-how and contribute to the establishment of a network of nuclear security-related personnel mainly in Asia.

(B) Development of Technology related to Measurement and Detection of Nuclear Material and Nuclear Forensics based on International Cooperation

Measurement and detection of nuclear material is a field in which Japan, as an advanced country in the areas of nuclear power, science and technology, should make further contributions. Based on the Japan-U.S. joint statement, Japan will strengthen cooperation with the United States in this field. As the authorities of the two countries recently reached agreement on cooperation in the development of technology that contributes to the advancement of the measurement and control of nuclear material, as well as technologies related to the detection of nuclear material and nuclear forensics that contribute to the identification of the sources (countries and facilities) of nuclear material illicitly trafficked or used in terrorist attacks, Japan will make increased contributions to the international community by establishing these technologies with more precise and accurate capabilities in detection and forensics within an approximate three year time frame and sharing the fruits of these new technologies with the international community.

(C) Contributions to IAEA Nuclear Security Programs

As the IAEA plays a central role in efforts to strengthen global nuclear security, Japan intends to continue to contribute to the IAEA under the new administration of Director General
Yukiya Amano. As part of its contributions to the IAEA, Japan is considering implementing projects worth $6.1 million in total, both to strengthen the physical protection of nuclear material in Kazakhstan in cooperation with the IAEA and to support nuclear security programs through increased voluntary contributions to the IAEA. It also plans to dispatch experts to the IAEA.

(D) Hosting of a WINS Conference

For the purpose of promoting the sharing of best practices regarding nuclear security, the World Institute for Nuclear Security (WINS) has been established. Japan highly values the contributions made by WINS, and will host an international conference of WINS this year in order to help to increase awareness about the importance of nuclear security in industrial circles.

5. The Role of the IAEA

(1) Basic Concept

Japan will support the IAEA’s activities to strengthen nuclear security, such as (i) formulation of rules, (ii) a comprehensive review of the implementation of nuclear security measures and (iii) support for capacity-building efforts, including human resource development.

The IAEA has played a central role in efforts to strengthen global nuclear security, and it is desirable for the Agency to continue strengthening its activities. To that end, it will be important for the IAEA to secure the necessary human, financial and other resources.

(2) Japan’s Contributions to the IAEA

Japan has actively participated in the drafting of the IAEA’s Nuclear Security series documents, including a recommendation regarding the protection of nuclear material (INFCIRC/225/Rev.5), thereby contributing to the formulation of rules on nuclear security by the IAEA. Following the publication of these documents, Japan would like to reflect their contents as necessary in domestic laws and regulations.

Moreover, Japan, in cooperation with the IAEA, has been implementing programs to strengthen nuclear security, improve accounting and control of nuclear material and enhance capabilities to detect nuclear material for the purpose of preventing illicit trafficking of such material in the former Soviet Republics of Kazakhstan and Georgia. In recent years, Japan has focused particularly on Asian countries including Vietnam and Thailand in implementing programs to strengthen the physical protection of nuclear material and improve capabilities to detect radioactivity, and it intends to continue cooperation with the IAEA to strengthen nuclear security in Asia. (End)