

The Statement of ACUNS Annual Meeting in Geneva on 24 June 2022:
Ambassador Takahiro SHINYO, President of the Japan Association for United Nations
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Mr. Shinyo noted that the war in Ukraine is a crisis of the UN security council, and the NPT system, over the malfunctioning of the UN, centered around the security council, and disarmament of the nuclear weapons. Regarding the dysfunction of the Security Council, Russia has made an overt invasion of the neighboring country, and the exercise of Russian veto power caused the security council to fail. As a result, the need for security council reform is once again recognized by countries around the world. All UN member states are required to take concrete measures to address the fundamental issue of veto restrictions.

Regarding the crisis of the NPT regime, a serious violation of international law over nuclear weapons continues, such as the threat to use it by Russia, and attacks on the nuclear power plants in Ukraine. Regarding the NPT treaty, the fact that the nuclear-weapon states have not fulfilled their obligation to negotiate disarmament in good faith based on article 6. This has shaken the NPT system itself in a form of non-compliance with the international treaty. On January 5th, 2022, a joint statement of the five nuclear-weapon states was issued, stating that the nuclear war should not be fought, but it shows how this will be treated after the Ukrainian war and must be seen whether a commitment of the nuclear weapon states to negotiate nuclear disarmament will be made. It will not be a substantial outcome of the August NPT Review Conference unless progress is made in this regard. Furthermore, if the final document would not be agreed upon, a yellow light would be lit to the continuation of the NPT system.

How to respond to the Treaty of the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW)? Japan should have attended the conference of the parties as an observer, and openly explain Japan's realistic nuclear disarmament proposal, to find a way to lead a pragmatic nuclear arms control and nuclear disarmament negotiations. Therefore, it is Japan's role to explain comprehensive approaches from the perspective of realism. Japan should continue to persuade nuclear weapon states and treaty parties to drive a disarmament process elsewhere, rather than TPNW. That is the responsibility of Japan, the country that was a victim of the nuclear bomb. It is an essence of Japan's role as a so-called bridge builder.

What about a specific direction of nuclear disarmament? Looking at the outcomes of the two nuclear disarmament conferences this year, TPNW and NPT, Japan should demonstrate leadership by proposing to hold the 4th UN special session devoted to disarmament as soon as possible. Today, after

experiencing an invasion of Ukraine, which was the biggest war since World War II, the 4th special session of the General Assembly is urgently needed. The world should not fall into the dualism of NPT or TPNW but should create a global platform for the promotion of a new nuclear disarmament process beyond NPT and TPNW. Based on the result of the G7 Hiroshima summit to be held in Japan next year, it is necessary to start the special session as soon as possible. The Security Council should take special responsibility for arms control and disarmament as well as international peace and security. According to the Article 47, paragraph 1, of the UN Charter, the Security Council is supposed to make concrete plans on issues related to the regulation of armaments and possible disarmament. However, the Security Council does not play this role. In 2018, Secretary-General Guterres released a report entitled "Agenda for Disarmament". He also stated in his report titled "Our Common Agenda" published in September 2021, that he would create a new agenda for peace, however, it should be created as soon as possible, including various proposals for disarmament.

In conclusion, actions to prevent international conflict in the Asia-pacific region are necessary. There is a political framework called ASEAN Regional Forum, to exchange views on Asian security. Most Asian countries, the US, Russia, and China participate in this. Today, tensions continue around Taiwan, the Korean Peninsula, the South China Sea, etc. as well as military and imperialistic expansion in East Asia. It seems that it would be necessary to agree on a political document such as the 1975 Helsinki Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), as an Asian version possibly based on this ASEAN Regional Forum. As Japan has always insisted on respect for human rights, strengthening economic and technical cooperation, the introduction of confidence-building measures as well as rule of law. It would include the first principle of the Helsinki Final Act, that changes in the status quo by force are not permissible. We should urgently agree on an Asian version of the Helsinki Final Act for conflict prevention so that we will not repeat a second Ukrainian war in Asia.

In responding to questions, Ambassador Shinyo noted that his personal view is that the Security Council must be of course reformed. To put it simply, the Council was not able to deter the aggression of Russia. The permanent members can't stop this, and the nuclear development made by North Korea, because there is always a veto. If it continues this way it will inevitably not possible to prevent a war to breakout. The responsibility of the permanent members in terms of the Russian aggression, and North Korean nuclear developments is how to stop it? If they should be cautious, then what should be done? Mr. Shinyo would like to see how Russia and China act against North Korea. If something serious happens, it is the Council's responsibility.

The Council can work by limiting the veto right, and instead of expanding permanent members, the focus should be on how to control the veto. This is possible without changing the Charter of the UN, and the right place to do this is the General Assembly. We need a resolution in the General Assembly, and then we could think about an enlargement. We should perhaps talk with Korea and other countries to see if something in-between could be possible. We should not follow the G4 idea anymore, and talk with other groups including Consensus Group. This is something that the Japanese government should do. How to make the CSCE type of conference in Asia? We have already necessary conditions in the framework of the ASEAN Regional Forum which includes ASEAN countries, Japan, China, Korea, Russia, and the US. Everybody is already in, and this must be the basis. It could be proposed by some of the ASEAN countries to have a kind of CSCE type of conference. We do not have to create any new forum, we have already.