

Joint Statement by Parliamentarians of Japan and the Republic of Korea on Denuclearization of Northeast Asia

The world now faces a critical juncture on the issue of nuclear weapons. On one hand, efforts are being made to resume the Six-Party Talks in order to achieve the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and the establishment of a regional peace regime in Northeast Asia. On the other hand, efforts towards “a world free of nuclear weapons” are gaining support worldwide, under the leadership manifested in the address by U.S. President Barack Obama in Prague in April 2009 and the five point proposal, including a call for negotiations for a Nuclear Weapons Convention, pronounced by U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon at the U.N. Headquarters in October 2008.

The denuclearization of Northeast Asia, where conflicts among states with and without nuclear weapons have long continued, is a test case for global efforts to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons. The history of Northeast Asia is paradoxical in that it is the sole region of the world to have suffered from the atrocity of nuclear warfare, while on the other hand, states in the region have continued to choose to rely on nuclear deterrence for their security.

Security based on nuclear deterrence will not bring real peace to the region. Rather, it will perpetuate insecurity rooted in arms races of distrust and never-ending confrontation. In order to liquidate the legacy of the Cold War and build peace in the region based on mutual trust, we, parliamentarians of Japan and the ROK, have agreed as follows:

1. We recognize the importance of solidarity and cooperation between Japan and the ROK in achieving the denuclearization of Northeast Asia, in which Japan, the ROK and the DPRK commit themselves not to possessing nuclear weapons, and the neighbor countries possessing nuclear weapons commit not to using or threatening to use such weapons against Japan the ROK and the DPRK, while striving for their own nuclear disarmament. Efforts by the Governments of Japan and the ROK, along with parliamentarians, local authorities, peace-loving citizens and NGOs in both countries, are critical to achieving this end.
2. We urge the Governments of Japan and the ROK to accelerate the normalization of relations with the DPRK through active dialogue and to seek solutions to the nuclear issues involving the DPRK through its return to the Six-Party Talks, as well as through credible measures taken by all the relevant countries to support its return.
3. We urge the Governments of Japan and the ROK to pledge and give support for medical care and compensation to the atomic bomb survivors including those from the DPRK and ROK and to

second generation survivors, and to establish concrete systems for this as needed. The two governments should also raise public awareness regarding the importance of abolishing nuclear weapons by making the tragedy caused by the atomic bombing widely known, and should provide education based on the lessons learned from these experiences.

4. We recognize that a Northeast Asia Nuclear Weapons-free Zone initiative will be effective for achieving the denuclearization of the region. We urge governments in the region, in particular those of Japan and the ROK, to fully discuss this proposal. We would also like to see various actors make continued efforts to gain international support. Especially, we call on the Governments of Japan and the ROK to advocate the establishment of a Northeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-free Zone in the international fora, including the NPT Review Conference and the U.N. General Assembly.

5. We declare our unconditional support for efforts toward “a world free of nuclear weapons” laid out in the above-mentioned speeches by President Barack Obama and U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon, believing that such efforts have opened a window of opportunity for achieving the denuclearization of Northeast Asia. We pledge to continue our cooperative efforts toward the denuclearization of Northeast Asia by grasping all available opportunities. We also appreciate international support and advice for our efforts while valuing lessons of existing NWFZs.

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Signed by (as of July 2011):

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