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International Conference, Building a Nuclear Weapon Free World

Astana, Kazakhstan August 29th, 2016

Remarks by Daisuke Yamaguchi, Japan, Peace Depot Researcher

Thank you for the chair and the ministry of foreign affairs of Kazakhstan to provide me with an opportunity to speak today.

I will introduce ongoing efforts to establish a North East Asia Nuclear Weapon Free Zone (NEA-NWFZ).

There are regional and global objectives of a NEA-NWFZ.

Since deadlock of the six party talk including the United States, Russia, China, North Korea, South Korea and Japan in 2008, the intermittent nuclear and missile tests by North Korea has raised military tension in the region. This needs to be reversed.

There has been a concern that Japan and South Korea would become the nuclear armed states if let the current situation alone. This needs to be prevented.

NWFZ is the first step of a regional security mechanism.

NWFZ reduces the role of nuclear weapons globally.

A NEA-NWFZ is the proposal by Japan and South Korea NGOs including Peace Depot that Japan, South Korea and North Korea will become a denuclearized area. At the same time, the surrounded nuclear armed states, which are United States, Russia and China will provide negative security assurance against these three denuclearized states.

There were recommendation and support to NEA-NWFZ by the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters to Secretary General in July 2013 and President Elbegdorj of Mongolia in September 2013 at the United Nations conferences.

There are political and religious initiatives and mention in Japan.

In April, 2012, then vice Prime Minister of Japan, Katsuya OKADA (Democratic Party of Japan) referred to a NEA-NWFZ. From 2013 through 2016, Foreign Ministry White Paper mentions a NEA-NWFZ.

A signature-collecting campaign for establishing a NEA-NWFZ was approved by members of Mayors for Peace and National Council of Japan Nuclear Free Local Authorities and Religions for Peace Japan.

On 6th July, 2016, North Korea made statement that the United States and South Korea should accept five demands of North Korea, if the United States and South Korea have an interest in denuclearization on the Korean Peninsula. Followings are five items.

1. all Nuclear weapons in South Korea to be open to world public
2. all Nukes and their bases in South Korea to be dismantled and verified by world public
3. The United States not to bring the nuclear strike means to South Korea and its vicinity
4. The United States not to use and threaten to use nukes against North Korea in any time
5. Declare withdrawal of the United States troops with nuclear capabilities from South Korea

South Korea didn't show positive response to it. Japanese media didn't much attention to the news. On the same day, U.S. took economic sanctions against Kim Jong-un and others due to human rights oppression by North Korea government. Next day, on 7th July, North Korea denounced the sanction is equal to war declaration. On 10th July, North Korea shut down formal diplomatic channel with the United States. The first four items were already agreed in the past negotiations in 1992, 2005. We should go beyond the concept

of “North Korea’s denuclearization first” with removal of North Korea’s suspicion that nuclear weapons aim at North Korea. We should resume dialogue and negotiation with North Korea immediately. We would like to energize a NEA-NWFZ among civil society to influence on government policies.

Thank you.