

(provisional translation)

December 24, 2009

Excellency,

I would like to take this opportunity to share with you my basic thoughts on the Nuclear Policy Review currently being undertaken by your government.

It goes without saying that the Japan-US Security Treaty forms the backbone of Japan's security. The Government of Japan (GOJ) fully recognizes the reality that it depends on the extended deterrence of the United States including nuclear deterrence and that the credibility of the deterrence must be backed by sufficient capability.

At the same time, the GOJ highly regards the fact that the United States stands at the forefront of global nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation, and ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons, as exemplified by President Obama's call for "a world without nuclear weapons". Japan intends to work alongside the United States in striving towards the realization of this supreme goal.

Thus, while the GOJ places its trust and importance on the extended deterrence of the United States, it does not call for policy of the United States to contradict the goal of "a world without nuclear weapons".

It has been reported in some parts of the Japanese media that, during the drafting stages of the Report by the Congressional Commission on the Strategic Posture of the United States published in May, Japanese diplomatic authorities had requested to the US side that the number of nuclear weapons not be decreased, or more specifically, expressed its opposition to the retirement of TLAM/N, or suggested that the US should possess RNEP.

However, the GOJ is not in a position to make a judgement on the desirability of individual weapon systems of the US. Thus, my understanding is that, in course of the exchange of views with the US side including the said Commission, while this was during the time of the previous Japanese Administration, the GOJ has never expressed its views on whether the US should or should not possess specific weapon systems such as TLAM/N and RNEP. Even if such a statement had in fact been made, that would clearly differ with my view to strive for nuclear disarmament.

At the same time, the GOJ continues to wish for explanation from the US side on policy regarding the extended deterrence of the United States, including the effects on extended deterrence toward Japan and measures to offset such effects should TLAM/N be retired.

As you may already be aware, the International Commission on Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament, which was established as a joint initiative of Japan and Australia, published its report on December 15. The report includes recommendations such as the following; all nuclear-armed states should retain nuclear weapons solely for purposes of deterring others from using such weapons; the use of nuclear weapons towards non-nuclear weapon states which are parties to the NPT should be prohibited. I have a keen interest in these recommendations as a first step toward “a world without nuclear weapons”. While it may not be possible to realize these immediately, I would like to have, between the two governments, further discussion on the possibility of adopting such measures in present or future policy.

Yours truly,

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