



**Statement by H.E. Mr. Koichiro Gemba, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan
at the 7th Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the CTBT
September 23, 2011**

Mr. and Madam Co-Chairs,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Government of Japan, I would first like to congratulate H.E.Ms. Patricia Espinosa Cantellano, Secretary of Foreign Affairs of the United Mexican States, and H.E.Mr. Carl Bildt, Foreign Minister of the Kingdom of Sweden, on their appointment as Co-Chairs for this Conference.

In the face of the Great East Japan Earthquake and the subsequent nuclear accident at the Fukushima Dai-ichi Nuclear Power Station, we have received kind support and warm expressions of solidarity from around the world. The Provisional Technical Secretariat (PTS) of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) undertook tremendous efforts to quickly provide to the international community accurate and objective information on the dispersion of radionuclides caused by the tsunami and the nuclear accident, using data from Japan as well. I would like to take this opportunity to express once again our sincere gratitude to you all.

Mr. and Madam Co-Chairs,

The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban-Treaty (CTBT), by prohibiting all nuclear explosions on earth, constrains the development and qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons, ends the development of new advanced types of nuclear weapons, and thereby prevents the emergence of a new nuclear armed state. Thus the CTBT is an indispensable step towards realizing the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons.

However, I deeply regret that, although 15 years have passed since its opening for signature in 1996, the CTBT has not yet entered into force up to the present day. Since the Prague speech by U.S. President Barack Obama in April 2009, the international momentum towards “A World without Nuclear Weapons” is building. It is high time that we, all states, take “United Action” towards facilitating the early entry into force of the CTBT, overriding confrontations between nuclear-weapon states and non-nuclear-weapon states. In this context, it is extremely important that we make use of the occasion of this well-attended, high-level conference and send a united message to the international community in order to make the prohibition of nuclear tests an international norm.

Mr. and Madam Co-Chairs,

For the early entry into force of the CTBT, I first and foremost appeal to the nine Annex 2 states that have yet to sign or ratify the CTBT to do so at the earliest possible time. I assume that various factors have led to this current situation and we need to act accordingly. It is encouraging that the executive branches of Indonesia and the United States have shown their willingness to ratify the CTBT. It is important for the international community to support them in this endeavour. With regard to the countries which have rejected to sign and ratify the CTBT on regional security grounds, we need to persistently advocate that the CTBT itself greatly contributes to regional confidence building and a more stable security environment. Furthermore, there is a need to seriously discuss how these regional security problems can be resolved.

All states should make efforts to promote the entry into force of the CTBT at the national, regional and global level in order to encourage non-signatories and non-ratifiers to sign and ratify at the earliest possible date. In fact, this is something that the NPT States Parties committed themselves to in the Action Plan of the NPT Review Conference last year.

At the same time, it is also essential to establish the prohibition of nuclear tests as a global norm pending the entry into force of the CTBT. From this point of view, maintaining all existing nuclear-test moratoriums is a crucial responsibility of all states possessing nuclear weapons. If a moratorium is broken, the international community must be united in

strongly condemning nuclear testing. The nuclear tests announced by the DPRK in 2006 and 2009 go drastically against this emerging global norm of banning all nuclear tests, and thus should be strongly condemned by the international community. I call upon all states to fully implement the Security Council resolutions 1718 and 1874 that were adopted in the wake of the DPRK's nuclear tests.

Mr. and Madam Co-Chairs,

Based on "Japan's initiative to promote the entry into force of the CTBT" introduced by then Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada at the 6th Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the CTBT in 2009, Japan has made vigorous efforts at the summit and ministerial level to encourage the remaining Annex 2 states to sign and ratify the Treaty. Furthermore, Japan has supported developing countries in their efforts to build up their national operation systems required for the verification of the CTBT by annually inviting seismological experts from non-signatories and non-ratifiers. Japan pledges to vigorously continue such activities.

The effectiveness of activities promoting the early entry into force of the CTBT would improve significantly if countries cooperate rather than act alone. In order to contribute to the implementation of the historic agreement at last year's NPT Review Conference, which includes facilitating the entry into force of the CTBT, Japan launched, jointly with Australia, a new action-oriented and cross-regional group called "Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI)".

To conclude, in cooperation with the NPDI members and all states present here, Japan reiterates its determination to take the lead on "United Action" to facilitate the entry into force of the CTBT.

Thank you.