

Japanese and Korean Parliamentary Actions on Nuclear Disarmament

May 5, 2017 13:15-14:30

PNND side event, Parliamentary actions for nuclear disarmament

Thank you, chair, distinguished delegates and fellows.

My name is Daisuke Yamaguchi, a researcher of Peace Depot, Japan and PNND Japan coordinator.

I will introduce recent Japanese and Korean parliamentary actions for nuclear disarmament.

In September 2015, at the 70th anniversary of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombing, legislators and religious leaders announced the Joint Statement “A Nuclear-Weapon-Free World: Our Common Good” by initiative of PNND Japan and Religions for Peace (RfP) Japan. Mayors for Peace also participated. In February 2017, 136 out of 717 Japanese legislators endorsed this Joint Statement. The joint Statement with endorsers list is planned to be submitted to United Nations Secretary General, Mr. Antonio Guterres next month. You'll find this statement in 8 languages at Unfoldzero website. (<http://www.unfoldzero.org/26-september-2015/#>)

In August 2016, the Special Session of the RfP International Standing Commission on Disarmament and Security was held at the United Nations University in Tokyo. Five Japanese parliamentarians including four PNND members attended. Two of the MPs made opening remarks. Dr. Hiromichi Umebayashi, PNND East Asia coordinator, gave a speech on the role of Japanese religious leaders in promoting the establishment of a North East Asia Nuclear Weapon Free Zone (NEA-NWFZ).

In August 2016, 10th PNND Japan general assembly was held. Eleven parliamentarians including six observer MPs attended. A Ministry of Foreign Affairs official briefed on Japan's nuclear disarmament policy. Mr. Kazuhiko Tamaki, President of Peace Depot provided a lecture on the 2016 UN Open Ended Working Group (OEWG) taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations, followed by an open Q&A session.

In October, 2016, on the occasion of 135th IPU Assembly, a PNND side event to discuss NWFZ and regional security was organized. Ms. Kim Maria, PNND East Asia Desk Officer participated as a panelist. She talked about the idea of the Three plus Three arrangement for a NEA-NWFZ. She had dialogues on the subject with parliamentary delegations from Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) and Japan.

In February 2017, PNND Japan held a study session on soon-coming UN conference to negotiate a treaty to prohibit nuclear weapons. Eighteen PNND Japan members attended. A Ministry of Foreign Affairs official briefed on the recent nuclear disarmament situation. Professor Tatsujiro Suzuki, Director of RECNA provided a lecture on the situation surrounding the negotiation conference. Parliamentarians actively exchanged their views on pros and cons of nuclear deterrence.

In March 2017, at the UN negotiation for nuclear weapons prohibition treaty, M.P. Mr. Kazuo Shii, a member of PNND Japan, made an intervention to express his support to a prohibition treaty.

In April 2017, at PNND forum in Dhaka, Bangladesh, PNND Council Member and PNND Japan Secretary General M.P. Mr. Keisuke Suzuki gave a speech on the security circumstances in North East Asia. He also interacted with Bangladesh parliamentarians.

In general, expectation from civil societies for parliamentary activities on nuclear disarmament is quite high in Japan. I would like to set up as many opportunities as possible where parliamentarians interact with civil societies.

Thank you.