

## **SWIFT ACTION REQUIRED AGAINST NORTH KOREAN THREATS**

Japan is currently a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), contributing to deliberations on critical security matters that impact the international community. Since its war-renunciation in its constitution in 1947, Japan has been a leading advocate for global peace and security, and the elimination and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

Over the years, Japan and its East Asian neighbours have witnessed the looming threat of nuclear proliferation on their doorstep as North Korea, also known as the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), has become one of the biggest threats to the stability and security of the region.

Since the DPRK's first nuclear test in October 2006, we have witnessed an ever-growing threat to international peace and security. In recent months, a series of nuclear tests and ballistic missile launches demand that the international community join forces in having the DPRK respond to security concerns, as well as humanitarian and human rights concerns expressed in numerous UN resolutions.

Japan has been the only country to suffer the devastating effects caused by the detonation of a nuclear device in the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. As such, Japanese citizens understand the severity and immediacy of the threat posed by North Korea. Our Prime Minister, Shinzo Abe, has clearly registered his grave concern, describing the DPRK's successive nuclear tests and ballistic missile launches as totally unacceptable actions which seriously undermine the world's peace and security.

After the missile launch on March 21, 2017, the UNSC condemned the launch as a grave violation of the DPRK's international obligations. The UNSC also called upon all Member States to redouble efforts to fully implement sanctions, which state that all Member States shall prevent direct or indirect supply, sale or transfer of any items that could contribute to the DPRK's nuclear or ballistic missile programmes. The resolutions also request that Member States' freeze all financial and/or other assets, which are owned or controlled by persons or entities involved in the DPRK's programmes, and prevent the entry or transit of those considered to be involved in the DPRK's programmes. Despite these restrictive measures, the DPRK has continued to defy UNSC resolutions and recently conducted another launch on April 5. The DPRK's actions further emphasise the urgent need for the full implementation of the sanctions against the DPRK.

Japan considers it extremely important that each Member State, in the Caribbean region and around the world, swiftly and fully implement the relevant resolutions to ensure their effectiveness.

Another issue that is of grave concern is the existing human rights situation in the DPRK as there has been no evidence of major improvements to stymie the DPRK's systematic and gross violation of human rights, which range from acts of torture, arbitrary detentions, violations of the freedom of expression and movement, to enforced

disappearances and the abduction of foreign nationals.

During the 1970s and 1980s, at least 17 Japanese citizens disappeared under unusual circumstances and the DPRK confessed to abducting 13 of them, of which 5 have returned to Japan. Japan is not alone. There are also missing persons from the Republic of Korea (South Korea), Thailand, Romania, Lebanon, Malaysia, Singapore, France, Italy, the Netherlands, and the United States of America.

Japan remains dedicated to seeing a world without nuclear weapons and looks forward to working even more closely with Trinidad and Tobago, as responsible members of the international community, to address the increasingly alarming threats posed by the DPRK's nuclear weapon and ballistic missiles programmes, as well as its appalling humanitarian and human rights situation that has impacted the lives of missing foreign citizens and that of their families.