

Hillary Rodham Clinton
United States Secretary of State

Allow me to convey my basic views regarding the Nuclear Posture Review (NPR) currently being conducted by the United States.

It goes without saying that the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty forms the basis of Japan's security. The Japanese government is well aware of the fact that Japan is dependent on the US extended deterrent, including the nuclear deterrent. Furthermore, it is necessary that trust in this deterrence be backed up by sufficient capability.

On the other hand, the Japanese government lauds the fact that President Obama called for a world without nuclear weapons and that your government is taking the lead in global nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear abolition. Together with the United States, the Japanese Government also wishes to strive for the realization of this noble goal.

Hence, while the Japanese Government places trust and importance on your government's extended deterrence, this does not mean that the Japanese Government demands a policy of your government which conflicts with the goal of a world without nuclear weapons.

It was reported in some sections of the Japanese media that, during the production of the report of the Congressional Commission on the Strategic Posture of the United States released in May this year, Japanese officials of the responsible diplomatic section lobbied your government not to reduce the number of its nuclear weapons, or, more specifically, opposed the retirement of the United States Tomahawk Land Attack Missile - Nuclear (TLAM/N) and requested that the United States maintain a Robust Nuclear Earth Penetrator (RNEP).

However, the Japanese Government is not in a position to judge whether it is necessary or desirable for your government to possess particular [weapons] systems. Hence, although the discussions were held under the previous Cabinet, it is my understanding that, in the course of exchanges between our countries, including the deliberations of the above mentioned Commission, the Japanese Government has expressed no view concerning whether or not your government should possess particular [weapons] systems such as TLAM/N and RNEP. If, hypothetically, such a view was expressed, it would clearly be at variance with my views, which are in favor of nuclear disarmament.

Nevertheless, if TLAM/N is retired, we hope to receive ongoing explanations of your government's extended deterrence policy, including any impact this might have on extended deterrence for Japan and how this could be supplemented.

Incidentally, I believe that you are already aware that, the International Commission on Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Nuclear Disarmament (ICNND), which was established as a joint Japan-Australia initiative, released its report on December 15. As a measure to be adopted by all nuclear weapon states, the report contains suggestions that the role of nuclear weapons be restricted to deterrence of the use of nuclear weapons and that the use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapon state members of the NPT be banned. I am very interested in these suggestions as first steps towards a world without nuclear weapons. While it may not be possible to realize these immediately, I would like to have further discussion between our two governments on the possibility of adopting such measures in present or future policy.

Japanese Minister for Foreign Affairs
December 24, 2009

(This is an unofficial translation of the letter of Japanese Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada to the US State Secretary Hillary Clinton dated December 24, 2009. Okada released the Japanese version of the letter at a press conference held in Tokyo on January 22, 2010. This is an unofficial translation of the Japanese version done by Philip White, Citizens' Nuclear Information Center.)