

Opening Remarks by H.E. Mr. Kazuo Kodama
Deputy Permanent Representative of Japan
to the United Nations
at the
discussion on the study:

**“Arms Control and Missile Proliferation in the Middle East”
Monday, October 15, 2012
The Church Center for the United Nations**

organized by the Permanent Missions of Japan, Austria and Finland to the United
Nations

15 October 2012

Distinguished Guests, Ladies, and Gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to welcome you today to the launch event for the book titled “Arms Control and Missile Proliferation in the Middle East.” This stimulating book outlines conditions and gives a number of recommendations with which an eventual reduction in missiles could be accomplished in the Middle East. The Permanent Missions of Japan, Austria, and Finland, together with the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung New York Office, organized today’s gathering as a forum at which experts and officials could analyze and debate the authors’ approaches.

This event is coming at a particularly opportune time in global non-proliferation efforts, with the start of the 2012 sessions of the First Committee and as we prepare for a conference on the establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and all other Weapons of Mass Destruction and their Delivery Systems, scheduled to take place in 2012.

Disarmament and non-proliferation remain cornerstones of Japan's foreign policy. In this vein, Japan and Australia inaugurated the Non-Proliferation Disarmament Initiative during the high-level segment of the 2010 General Assembly. The NPDI is a cross-regional group that aims to promote implementation of the consensus outcome of the 2010 NPT Review Conference and to contribute to the steady reduction of nuclear risks. Foreign Minister Gemba co-chaired the most recent ministerial-level meeting of the NPDI, held on September 26th of this year during the opening of the 67th General Assembly. NPDI members attach great importance to the establishment of a WMDFZ in the Middle East and will continue to remain engaged in supporting the work of the UN and the key states involved in promoting this objective.

To have true and tangible success in achieving the goal of disarmament and non-proliferation in any region, we need to consider this issue from a global perspective. This is precisely because the proliferation of goods and technologies will take place at a global level. We have witnessed in recent years various cases of violations of UN Security Council sanctions resolutions in relation to the illegal trafficking of goods and technologies related to weapons of mass destructions, especially in the area of missile technologies. Missiles, as the book before you indicates, can cause extreme destruction with both WMDs and conventional weapons or even by themselves, thus generating an acute threat to international peace and security. This is particularly true not only in the Middle East region but also in East Asia, where Japan faces imminent challenges.

In order to address such challenges both in regional and global context, Japan has been actively engaging in various non-proliferation efforts, including through being

initial members of both the Missile Technology Control Regime and the Proliferation Security Initiative, which both tackle the proliferation of missile related goods and technologies. For example, Japan recently hosted a PSI Air Interdiction Exercise in July 2012 and has previously conducted two PSI Maritime Interdiction Exercises in 2004 and 2007.

Japan is deeply committed to raising awareness on both the WMD Free Zone in the Middle East and missile technology proliferation, and finds it appropriate to sponsor this event. While we have some reservations regarding the observations made in this publication, we find it extremely important to engage in active discussions on this subject with key partners in the field. Japan will continue to advocate the need to closely link regional non-proliferation and the global cooperation, and this meeting can be regarded as one of those efforts. We look forward to having active discussions among ourselves today.

Thank you very much for your attention.