

Statement (Japan): Russia's Decision to Deploy Tactical Nuclear Weapons in Belarus should be Retracted Immediately

Monday 1 May 2023, by [Japan Council against A and H Bombs \(Gensuikyo\)](#) (Date first published: 27 March 2023).

1. On March 25, Russian President Vladimir Putin announced the deployment of tactical nuclear weapons in neighboring Belarus. The announcement says that a storage facility for these weapons in the country is scheduled to be completed by July 1, and that nuclear-capable aircraft and missiles (Iskander) have already been delivered there. This decision further heightens the danger of this region which has been exposed to Russia's aggression against Ukraine and its repeated threats to use nuclear weapons. We strongly protest against the decision and urge Russia to retract it immediately.

2. President Putin is trying to justify the decision, saying that the US has already deployed tactical nuclear weapons to NATO member states. Of course, the conduct of the U.S. and the NATO member states is the violation of the NPT (Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty) that prohibits the transfer or receipt of nuclear weapons, and it has been severely condemned at the previous NPT Review Conferences.

Their precedents, however, do not permit other nuclear weapon states to turn their backs on nuclear nonproliferation and abolition and abandon their obligations. Those who trample on International Law should be accused and forced to stop their outrages by the power of world public opinion.

3. The use of nuclear weapons is the worst crime that inflicts a catastrophe on all mankind. Nuclear weapon states should make every effort to avert that danger. We call on Russia to immediately stop all dangerous actions involving nuclear weapons such as threats to use them and transfer of them to other countries, and to cease aggression against Ukraine, withdraw its troops and begin efforts for the peaceful settlement of the war. We also urge all nuclear-weapon states to fulfill all provisions of the NPT and their promise they themselves agreed at the 2010 NPT Review Conference to "achieve the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons".

4. The current situation shows again and again that responses with nuclear weapons and force to conflicts will only escalate them to a more dangerous stage. The only sure guarantee to prevent the use of nuclear weapons is to abolish them. Now is the time for us to enhance public support for the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons. The Japanese government must also play a role as the only A-bombed country.

As the chair of the G7 Hiroshima Summit, the Japanese government should call for not only Russian withdrawal of the decision to deploy tactical nuclear weapons to Belarus but also all efforts that leads to the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons, including cooperation in the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), with an eye to the start of the new process for the next NPT Review Conference in July. We also call on the Japanese government to review the current strengthening of military blocs, depending on the U.S. nuclear umbrella and extraordinary military buildup, and go back to the path of the elimination of nuclear weapons, Japan's joining in the TPNW

and the realization of peace through diplomacy in line with the Constitution and the desire of the Japanese people.

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