

34th Session of the Human Rights Council (13 March 2017)

Interactive Dialogue with

Special Rapporteur on the human rights situation in the DPRK

Mr. Tomás OJEA QUINTANA

Statement by Ambassador Junichi IHARA

Permanent Mission of Japan in Geneva

Mr. President,

Three years ago, the COI report pointed out the systematic and protracted human rights violations in North Korea. Since then there has been no improvement in the situation, including the abduction of foreign nationals, which is one of the gravest ongoing human rights violations by the DPRK.

Over the past year, provocative actions by the DPRK have been escalating, illustrated by its nuclear tests and missile launches. These do not only represent a serious security threat to the international community, but also result in worsening its already dire human rights and humanitarian situation, by diverting its scarce resources to the development of weapons of mass destruction and missiles, despite urgent needs of the people like the devastating flood last August. As the Security Council Resolution 2321 mentions, the relationship between security and human rights becomes increasingly important.

Mr. Special Rapporteur,

Japan welcomes your report and supports your two-track strategy of engagement and accountability, although the DPRK has not shown any political will toward engagement. We strongly urge the DPRK to take concrete action towards cooperation with the international community, by responding to a number of appeals and expressions of concern from this Council and the Special Rapporteur.

Japan also appreciates the report of the Group of Independent Experts, which compiled comprehensive options for seeking accountability. In following up on the report, it is particularly important to strengthen the resources of the OHCHR.

Together with the EU, Japan plans to submit a draft resolution on the human rights situation in the DPRK to this Council session. We hope it will be adopted by consensus.