

**34th Session of the Human Rights Council (14 March 2017)**

**General debate on ITEM 4**

**Statement by Mr. Kansuke NAGAOKA**

**Minister, Permanent Mission of Japan in Geneva**

Mr. President,

Japan's stance on human rights situations that require the urgent attention of the international community, including those in Syria, Iran, and South Sudan, is as mentioned in the Interactive Dialogue.

The international community must join together in addressing such human rights situation, including the issue of abduction by North Korea. I regret to say that there has been no improvement in the dire human rights situation pointed out by the COI report three years ago. North Korea has repeated the provocative actions, including nuclear tests and missile launches, while ignoring the dire human rights and humanitarian situation of its own citizens.

Japan requests the DPRK to take the following actions: 1) Listen sincerely to the repeated expressions of concern from the international community, take a hard look at the dire human rights situation, including the issue of abduction, and take concrete steps toward cooperation with international community; and 2) cooperate with the UN human rights mechanisms, including the Special Rapporteur on the human rights situation in the DPRK and the OHCHR Seoul Office.

Japan intends to provide its full cooperation to the Special Rapporteur and the Seoul Office and asks other Member States to also lend them their cooperation. Together with the EU, Japan plans to submit a draft resolution on the human rights situation in the DPRK this Council session. The resolution takes into account the reports of the Special Rapporteur Ojea Quintana and the Group of Independent Expert on accountability, and calls for the strengthening OHCHR, including the Seoul Office. We ask the other Members of this Council for their support to ensure that this resolution is adopted by consensus.

Finally, Japan expresses its concern that in certain countries we continue to witness various issues related to respect for freedom and basic human rights, and the rule of law, including suppression of freedom of expression and freedom of association and the administration of punishments that are not based in law. These are fundamental values at the very core of democracy and the Human Rights Council must not remain indifferent to this situation.