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Daisuke Akimoto Ph.D.

Independent Scholar, Shinjuku, Tokyo, Japan, Daisuke.akimoto.academic@gmail.com

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The Nuclear Weapons Prohibition Treaty
and the Paradox of Japan's Nuclear Identity

Daisuke Akimoto PhD
Independent Scholar
Shinjuku, Tokyo, Japan
Daisuke.akimoto.academic@gmail.com

Abstract

On 7 July 2017, the “Nuclear Weapons Prohibition Treaty” (NWPT) to ban nuclear weapons in general was adopted in the United Nations General Assembly. The Japanese government, however, voted against the NWPT while insisting on its own resolution plan to facilitate global nuclear elimination. This paper examines Japan's nuclear identity with regard to the legal prohibition of nuclear weapons, especially the NWPT. Why did the Japanese government vote against the NWPT despite the fact that Japan is the sole state to have ever suffered nuclear bombing in war? With a view to providing multiple perspectives regarding this simple but important question, this paper applies “analytical eclecticism” in combination with international relations theory. The multiple theoretical perspectives on Japan's policy toward nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament are instrumental in clarifying Japan's nuclear identity and exploring its role in nuclear abolition. Finally, this paper considers alternative policy options that the Japanese government needs to take into consideration and put into practice in order to bridge a gap between nuclear and non-nuclear countries toward the total elimination of nuclear weapons

Keywords: Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), Nuclear Weapons Prohibition Treaty (NWPT), nuclear disarmament, nuclear identity, the US nuclear umbrella

On 7 July 2017, the “Nuclear Weapons Prohibition Treaty” (NWPT), or the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, was adopted in the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) with 122 countries in favor, one country (Netherlands) opposed, and one (Singapore) abstaining. The NWPT is designed to ban nuclear weapons in general and signatory countries are not allowed to develop, test, produce, manufacture, acquire, possess, stockpile, transfer, receive, use, or threaten to use nuclear weapons (United Nations, 2017, July 7, p. 12).

The necessity of a legally binding instrument to ban nuclear weapons had been discussed by international non-governmental organizations (NGO) in the 1990s. In April 1996, the International Association of Lawyers Against Nuclear Arms (IALANA), the International Network of Engineers and Scientists Against Proliferation (INESAP), and the International Physicians for Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW) proposed to create a Nuclear Weapons Convention (NWC) (Datan, Hill, Scheffran, & Ware, 2007; IALANA, 2009). Importantly, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) issued an advisory opinion on legality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons in July 1996 (ICJ, 1996). The draft of the NWC was submitted by Costa Rica to the United Nations in November 1997. In December 2007, Costa Rica and Malaysia submitted an updated draft of the NWC to the United Nations Secretary General (UNSG) (United Nations, 2008, January 18). In this context, UNSG Ban Ki-moon proposed to initiate negotiations for the NWC in October 2008 (UN News Centre, 2010, August 6), and U.S. President Barack Obama declared to pursue a world without nuclear weapons in Prague in April 2009.

Meanwhile, the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) has played a leading role in facilitating the nuclear disarmament movement to create a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons (ICAN, 2010, 2012). Moreover, the international conference on “humanitarian impact” of nuclear weapons was held in Oslo of Norway in March 2013 (Norwegian Government, 2013, March 11). The international conferences on humanitarian impact on nuclear weapons were also held in Nayarit of Mexico in February 2014, and in Vienna of Austria in December 2014 (Reaching Critical Will, 2014, February 14, 2014, December 9). From 27 April to 22 May 2015, the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference took place at the United Nations in New York, yet the conference failed to lead to an outcome document (United Nations, 2015).

In order to overcome the stalemate, the Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) was set up in the UNGA, and the OEWG adopted a resolution draft to start negotiations for the NWPT in August 2016. In October 2016, the UNGA adopted a resolution to initiate negotiations for the NWPT as of March 2017. The Japanese government, however, voted against the resolution to start talks on the NWPT which was adopted with as many as 122 countries in favor, decided not to participate in the negotiation conference at the United Nations, and eventually opposed the Treaty.

Why did the Japanese government vote against the NWPT despite the fact that Japan is the sole state to have ever suffered nuclear bombing in war? With a view to providing multiple perspectives concerning this paradox, this paper applies “analytical eclecticism” in combination with international relations theory. The multiple theoretical viewpoints on Japan’s policy toward nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament are instrumental in clarifying Japan’s nuclear identity. Finally, this paper explores alternative policy options that the Japanese government will be able to take into consideration and put into practice.

Japan's Opposition to the Nuclear Weapons Prohibition Treaty

Based on the international conferences regarding the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of nuclear detonation, the OEWG was established in the UNGA. The three sessions were held in Geneva of Switzerland from 22 February to 19 August 2016, and the OEWG adopted a resolution draft to start negotiations for the NWPT in its final report (Reaching Critical Will, 2016, August 19). On 27 October 2016, the First Committee on Disarmament in the UNGA adopted a resolution to initiate negotiations for the NWPT as of 27 March 2017, but the Japanese government voted against the resolution (United Nations, 2016, October 14). On 23 December 2016, the same resolution was adopted by the UNGA, and Japan voted against the resolution again (United Nations, 2016, December 23).

In response to the decision by the Japanese government, both domestic and international newspapers responded with criticism. For instance, *Asahi Shimbun* criticized the Japanese government for prioritizing the “nuclear umbrella” of the United States over the NWPT. *Asahi Shimbun* made a harsh comment that Japan's decision caused strong criticism by “*hibakusha*,” survivors of atomic bombings in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. In its editorials, *Asahi Shimbun* commented that the decision by the Japanese government was “extremely regrettable” (*Asahi Shimbun*, 2016, October 29).

Mainichi Shimbun commented that Japan's vote against the resolution would lead to international criticism by non-nuclear states and non-governmental organizations that work for nuclear abolition. It was reported that Akira Kawasaki, one of the representatives of the ICAN, criticized the decision arguing that Japan took sides with nuclear states. Also, it noted that Yasuto Fukui, associate professor of Hiroshima City University, contended that Japan should have abstained rather than oppose the resolution (*Mainichi Shimbun*, 2016, October 28). The editorials of *Mainichi Shimbun*, moreover, commented that Japan as a “mediator” between nuclear and non-nuclear states should not have opposed the resolution (*Mainichi Shimbun*, 2016, October 29).

Tokyo Shimbun noted that Japan's decision was “contradictory” because Japan as a nuclear-bombed state has consistently pursued nuclear abolition and submitted its own resolution draft for nuclear abolition (*Tokyo Shimbun*, 2016, October 28). *Tokyo Shimbun* moreover argued that Japan would lose its identity as a “mediator” between nuclear and non-nuclear states in the debate and facilitation of nuclear disarmament. It also highlighted that Japan's opposition to the resolution was regarded as a “betrayal” to *hibakusha* and caused anger of those who work for nuclear abolition (*Tokyo Shimbun*, 2016, October 29).

Japan Times was acrimonious, denouncing that Japan's opposition to the resolution was “regrettable” and “hypocritical” (*Japan Times*, 2016, November 3). *Nihon Keizai Shimbun* reported that Japan's opposition clarified a gap between an ideal of nuclear abolition and a reality of security. The newspaper contended that the opposition by Japan as a sole nuclear-bombed state that pursues nuclear abolition was “contradiction” (*Nihon Keizai Shimbun*, 2016, October 29). One of the survivors of nuclear bombing of Hiroshima stated that “Japan should sign, and its refusal to do so broke the hearts of many survivors,” and Tomihisa Taue, mayor of Nagasaki City, criticized the Abe government for opposing the NWPT during the memorial service on 9 August 2017 (*Asahi Shimbun*, 2017, September 22). Furthermore, Japan's decision on the NWPT was academically criticized by the supporters of the treaty,

describing Japan's opposition to the treaty as "the wrong side of history, geography, legality, morality, and humanity" (Thakur, 2017).

Here, a simple question instantly rises. Why did Japan as a sole state that suffered from nuclear bombs in war vote against the resolution on the NWPT? With regard to this question, on behalf of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan (MOFA), Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida explained that the Japanese government voted against the resolution on the NWPT because nuclear states opposed the resolution, and therefore, the resolution would eventually enlarge the discrepancy between nuclear and non-nuclear states. Moreover, the resolution did not include Japan's proposals that value early conclusion of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), negotiations for the Fission Material Cutoff Treaty (FMCT), alarm-off of nuclear weapons, and transparency of nuclear power (MOFA, 2017, July 11). Yet, the explanation by the Japanese government seems to be elusive and paradoxical, and therefore, theoretical and multilayered viewpoints are necessary to comprehend Japan's opposition to the NWPT.

Analytical Eclecticism: Theoretical Perspectives of Japan's Nuclear Identity

In an attempt to provide wider and multiple perspectives on the reasons that Japan opposed the NWPT, this section seeks to employ orthodox international relations theory in combination with an approach of "analytical eclecticism." A research method, analytical eclecticism, was proposed by Peter Katzenstein in order to examine Japan's security policy. Katzenstein set forth the necessity of a method of analytical eclecticism as follows:

Some writings on Japanese security may, in the future, be able to take a more eclectic turn, by incorporating elements drawn from three different styles of analysis—the testing of alternative explanations, the rendering of synthetic accounts, and historically informed narratives (Katzenstein, 2008, p. 3).

First, "classical liberalism" premises that "the application of reason and ethics to international relations can lead to a more orderly, just, and cooperative world" and perpetual peace and complete disarmament are achievable as argued by Immanuel Kant (Kegley & Blanton, 2011, p. 37, 38). Japan's "anti-nuclear pacifism" based on the experience of bombings on Hiroshima and Nagasaki coincides with the theoretical premise of classical liberalism. Second, the main argument of "neo-liberalism" is that "international cooperation" is possible and achievable in international relations by creating "international regimes" (Ibid, pp. 42-43). As premised by neo-liberalism, Japan has made a contribution to the international movement for nuclear disarmament by submitting its own resolution plan to the UNGA every year and facilitating the non-proliferation and disarmament regime.

Third, the premise of "classical realism" is that sovereign states tend to maximize their national interests, and a fundamental national interest for sovereign countries is independence and survival (Ibid, pp. 31-32). In this sense, it is natural for Japan as a sovereign state to seek to normalize its military capability, because Japan is surrounded by nuclear-armed countries, especially North Korea. Fourth, the argument of "neo-realism" is that the essential nature of international relations is "anarchic," and a policy of "balance of power" is significant, whereas a "hegemonic state" provides international order and influences decision-making of other countries (Ibid, p. 35, 66). In this light, the Japan-U.S. alliance, especially the U.S. nuclear umbrella, is vital for Japan's security policy.

In addition, “constructivism” as an analytical approach of international relations values “norms and identities” that construct sovereign states and the international system (Ibid, pp. 46-50; Wendt, 1992). In terms of constructivism in application of analytical eclecticism to the analysis of Japan’s policy toward nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, Japan’s “nuclear identity” can be classified as: a) nuclear-bombed state (classical liberalism), b) nuclear disarmament state (neo-liberalism), c) nuclear-threatened state (classical realism), and d) nuclear-umbrella state (neo-realism), as in Table below. These four theoretical perspectives will assist in examining multiple factors for which the Japanese government opposed the NWPT.

Table: Four Theoretical Perspectives on Japan’s Nuclear Identity

<p>a) Nuclear-Bombed State</p> <p>Classical Liberalism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Anti-nuclear pacifism ▪ Bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki ▪ Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution ▪ The Three Non-Nuclear Principles 	<p>b) Nuclear Disarmament State</p> <p>Neo-Liberalism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ International cooperation ▪ International regimes ▪ Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) ▪ Legal prohibition of nuclear weapons
<p>c) Nuclear-Threatened State</p> <p>Classical Realism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The right of individual self-defense ▪ Self-Defense Forces (SDF) Law ▪ Threats of nuclear-armed neighbor states ▪ Ballistic missile defense (BMD) system 	<p>d) Nuclear-Umbrella State</p> <p>Neo-Realism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The right of collective self-defense ▪ Japan-U.S. Security Treaty ▪ Nuclear strategy of the United States ▪ Nuclear umbrella of the United States

Note: The above is an original analysis by the author.

a) Classical Liberalism: Japan as a “Nuclear-Bombed State”

A theory of classical liberalism, which developed based on the devastating experience of the First World War, values morals and ethics in an analysis of politics and international relations (e.g. Carr, 1949). From a perspective of classical liberalism, it is natural for Japan to become an “anti-war/anti-nuclear pacifist state” after the devastation in the Asia Pacific War. In the end of the war, the United States dropped an atomic bomb on Hiroshima on 6 August 1945, and Japan became the sole country that suffered nuclear bombing in war. Three days later, another atomic bomb was dropped on Nagasaki by the United States. From a perspective of classical liberalism and constructivism, therefore, Japan’s nuclear identity can be defined as a “nuclear-bombed state” (*hibakukoku*), although there are other countries that suffered from detonation of nuclear testing (e.g. Akimoto, 2014, p. 97).

In addition to the atomic bombings on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan was victimized by the hydrogen bomb test. On 1 March 1954, crew members of Daigo Fukuryūmaru (Lucky Dragon No.5) were exposed to nuclear fallout at Bikini Atoll in the Marshall Islands as a result of a hydrogen bomb test by the United States. All 23

crew members suffered from radiation sickness, and Aikichi Kuboyama died of acute radiation sickness on 23 September 1954. Based on this hydrogen bomb experience as well as the atomic bombings on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, an anti-nuclear peace movement has been active in Japan (e.g. Oishi, 2011).

Based on the nuclear identity as a nuclear-bombed state, Japan adopted an original nuclear policy, the so-called “Three Non-Nuclear Principles” (non-possession, non-production, and non-introduction of nuclear weapons) proposed by Prime Minister Eisaku Sato in the House of Representatives on 11 December 1967 (MOFA, 2014). Theoretically, nuclear disarmament and the non-proliferation regime can be regarded as Kantian liberal tradition (Franceschet, 2013, pp. 145-147), and in this regard, Japan’s non-nuclear policy and support for the NPT regime is consistent with classical liberalism.

The Sato government decided to make the Three Non-Nuclear Principles a national principle by adopting a resolution in the House of Representatives on 24 November 1971. Notably, the Three Non-Nuclear Principles are reflected in *Defense Whitepaper*, annually published by the Ministry of Defense of Japan (Mizumoto, 2016, p. 208). In this sense, the Three Non-Nuclear Principles can be regarded as a fundamental “norm” that constructs Japan’s nuclear identity as a nuclear-bombed state.

Japan’s nuclear identity as a nuclear-bombed state is exemplified in the Nobel Peace Prize speech by Prime Minister Eisaku Sato on 11 December 1974. In his Nobel Prize lecture, Prime Minister Sato cited Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution stressing the essence of anti-war/anti-nuclear pacifism of Japan, and emphasized the importance of nuclear non-proliferation regime under the NPT (Nobelprize.org, 1974, December 11). The prime minister highlighted Japan’s nuclear identity as a nuclear-bombed state and the significance of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament as follows:

Japan is the only country in the world to have suffered the ravages of atomic bombing. That experience left an indelible mark on the hearts of our people, making them passionately determined to renounce all wars... The proliferation of nuclear weapons may well jeopardize the very survival of mankind. Nuclear disarmament has now become a matter of the utmost urgency (Ibid).

On the basis of its anti-war/anti-nuclear pacifism as a nuclear-bombed state, the Japanese government has consistently proposed resolution plans for nuclear abolition to the United Nations since 1994. On 5 December 2016, a resolution plan for nuclear abolition submitted by the Japanese government titled “United Action with Renewed Determination towards the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons” was adopted in the UNGA, for which as many as 167 countries including the United States voted (United Nations, 2016, December 12). Then, why did the Japanese government oppose the NWPT?

The Japanese government opposed the NWPT because the government has sought to pursue a “realistic” approach toward nuclear elimination. Indeed, Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida expounded that even after the NWPT comes into effect, it would not necessarily be “effective” to abolish nuclear weapons, if nuclear states do not abide by the NWPT (*Mainichi Shimbun*, 2016, October 29). It can be observed that Japan’s nuclear identity and its international image as a nuclear-bombed state was weakened by opposing the NWPT. It signifies that the perspective of classical liberalism does not provide sufficient explanations for the decision by the Japanese government, and other theoretical viewpoints are necessary.

b) Neo-Liberalism: Japan as a “Nuclear Disarmament State”

From a viewpoint of neo-liberalism, it is understandable for Japan to become a “nuclear disarmament state” that values “international regimes,” such as arms control, disarmament, and non-proliferation based on the ideal of “international cooperation.” This is because neo-liberalism holds the premise that international cooperation is possible under the anarchic international system (e.g. Keohane & Nye, 1977) on the basis of “international regimes” (e.g. Krasner ed., 1983). In the Cold War era, Japan supported the non-proliferation and disarmament regime, particularly the NPT. Notably, the Japanese government made an original diplomatic contribution to the conclusion of the Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty (Segawa, 2016, pp. 344-347). In the post-Cold War period, Japan has made continuous diplomatic and international contributions to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation not only as a “nuclear-bombed state” but also as a “nuclear disarmament state” (e.g. MOFA, 2016). For this reason, it has been argued that Japan is expected to be a “bridge-builder” for nuclear abolition through its disarmament diplomacy (Toki, 2015).

A central international regime of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation has been the NPT, which was created on 1 July 1968 and took effect on 5 March 1970 (IAEA, 1970). The Japanese government signed the NPT in February 1970 and ratified it in June 1976. Japan has supported the NPT regime composed of the following three pillars: a) nuclear non-proliferation, b) nuclear disarmament, and c) peaceful use of nuclear energy (MOFA, 2011, p. 14). Without doubt, the NPT regime is categorized as an international regime that neo-liberalism premises.

In addition to the support for the NPT regime, the Japanese government has made diplomatic endeavors for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation by submitting a resolution plan for nuclear abolition to the UNGA every year. Japan’s first resolution plan to the UNGA was submitted by the Tomiichi Murayama government on 15 December 1994 (MOFA, 2016, p. 13). In the resolution, “General and Complete Disarmament,” it was agreed that the UNGA would seek “step-by-step reduction of nuclear threat” as well as “nuclear disarmament with a view to the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons” (United Nations, 1994, December 15).

While facilitating the global nuclear elimination trend in the United Nations, the Japanese government in cooperation with the Australian government initiated the “International Commission on Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament” (ICNND), and organized international conferences in Sydney, Washington, Moscow, and Hiroshima. In 2009, the ICNND published its final report in which both governments proposed to facilitate nuclear abolition by creating a legally binding framework (ICNND, 2009).

The diplomatic endeavor of the ICNND was developed into another multilateral disarmament diplomacy as the “Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative” (NPDI) supported by foreign ministers of the following 12 countries: Australia, Canada, Chili, Germany, Japan, Mexico, Netherlands, Nigeria, the Philippines, Poland, Turkey, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in 2010. The first NPDI conference was co-chaired by Japan and Australia on 22 September 2010, and the “Joint Statement on Nuclear Disarmament and Non-Proliferation” was issued by 10 foreign ministers in New York (MOFA, 2010, September 22). Both the ICNND and the NPDI based on Japan’s disarmament diplomacy are dedicated to international

cooperation to strengthen nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament as an international neo-liberal regime.

As a “nuclear disarmament state,” the Japanese government hosted the 8th NPDI conference in Hiroshima on 11 and 12 April 2014. The 8th NPDI statement emphasized the necessity of “systematic and continued reduction of all types of nuclear weapons” (MOFA, 2014, April 12). Moreover, the Japanese government held the G7 Foreign Ministers’ Meeting in Hiroshima on 10 and 11 April 2016. Notably, U.S. Secretary of State John F. Kerry and the other G7 ministers visited the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park (MOFA, 2016, April 11). After the G7 Ise-Shima Summit, the Japanese government succeeded in inviting President Barack Obama to both the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park and the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum on 27 May 2016 (MOFA, 2016, May 27). Thus, nuclear disarmament diplomacy by the Japanese government bore step-by-step but concrete diplomatic fruits.

If Japan advocates the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime, why was the Japanese government against the NWPT? Given the characteristics of Japan’s nuclear disarmament diplomacy and resolution plans to the UNGA for nuclear abolition, it can be considered that the Japanese government has adopted the “inclusive” and incremental approach toward nuclear elimination. Indeed, Japan’s resolution plan, “United Action with Renewed Determination towards the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons,” adopted in the UNGA, valued “united action” including from nuclear-armed states, especially the United States, and was supported by 167 countries (United Nations, 2016, December 12).

Japan’s resolution plan for nuclear elimination is, therefore, consistent with “international cooperation” as the neo-liberalists premise. Apparently, the Japanese government has pursued “international cooperation” by proposing its own resolution plan which is “agreeable” to other UN member states including nuclear-armed states. Having said that, Japan’s nuclear identity as a “nuclear disarmament state” is not necessarily consistent with its decision to oppose the NWPT. Hence, it is important to take realist perspectives into consideration to figure out why the Japanese government did not support the NWPT..

c) Classical Realism: Japan as a “Nuclear-Threatened State”

In terms of a classical realist perspective, it is important to take Japan’s national interests into consideration in examining reasons why Japan does not support the NWPT. For a sovereign state, political independence is the most integral national interest (e.g. Morgenthau, 2006), and nuclear-armed countries surrounding Japan can be perceived as potential and real threats to the survival of Japan (Swaine, Swanger, & Kawakami 2001). In fact, Japan’s attitude toward the NWPT could be “influenced by whether and how it can effectively promote nuclear disarmament in a manner that helps reduce the nuclear threats Japan perceives vis-à-vis North Korea, China and Russia” (Tosaki & Hayashi, 2016, p. 22). In this sense, Japan’s nuclear identity in terms of classical realism can be defined as a “nuclear-threatened state.”

In reality, Japan has been surrounded by three nuclear-armed states, i.e. Russia, China, and North Korea, and it is perceived that its security environment has been becoming increasingly severe (MOD, 2016). During the Cold War era, the Soviet Union as a nuclear super power was a threat to the defense of Japan, but nuclear weapons of Russia are not a direct threat to peace and security of Japan in the post-Cold War period. Still, Japan fears that any accidental launches of nuclear

weapons by Russia might occur, and that some state or non-state actors could acquire formerly Soviet ballistic missiles to attack Japan (Swaine, Swanger, & Kawakami, 2001, p. 18).

Similarly, nuclear weapons of China, such as both intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBM) and submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBM), could reach the territory of Japan as concerned by Japanese strategists, military analysts, and politicians (Ibid, p. 14). Yet, nuclear weapons of North Korea are more imminent and threatening to the defense of Japan than those of Russia and China. The threat of North Korean nuclear capability and ballistic missiles stimulated Japan's policy on the development of ballistic missile defense system (Ibid, pp. 11-14).

Reportedly, North Korea announced that it manufactured nuclear weapons in 2005, and has conducted a number of nuclear tests including hydrogen bomb tests. In addition, it is likely that North Korea succeeded in miniaturizing nuclear weapons through the successive nuclear tests. This means that North Korea could launch ballistic missiles mounted with nuclear warheads in an attempt to target Japan, causing a direct and imminent threat to the defense of Japan (MOD, 2016, pp. 21-23).

In this regard, it is natural for Japan as a "nuclear-threatened state" to promote nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. With a view to denuclearizing the Korean Peninsula, the so-called Six-Party Talks, composed of Japan, the United States, China, South Korea, Russia, and North Korea, was initiated in August 2003. Notably, in the fourth round of the Six-Party Talks held in September 2005, a joint statement was adopted to achieve the abandonment of "all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programs" of North Korea. However, the Six-Party Talks have been suspended since December 2008 by the opposition of North Korea (MOFA, 2011, pp. 37-38). It is evident that North Korea has improved its nuclear capabilities and this is one of the reasons why Japan as a nuclear-threatened state submitted its original resolution plan to the UNGA in pursuit of a world without nuclear weapons, including the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

Likewise, it is rational to comprehend that the Japanese government did not vote for the UNGA resolution to start negotiations for the NWPT because the resolution would be agreeable and beneficial for North Korea, which tends to ignore international disarmament and non-proliferation regime. It is highly unlikely that North Korea abides by the NWPT since it repeatedly ignored UN resolutions and seceded from the NPT (e.g. Perkovich, 2017, p. 9). With regard to the nuclear threat of North Korea, Nobushige Takamizawa, Japanese Ambassador to the Conference on Disarmament, mentioned North Korea's nuclear and missile threats as "a real and imminent security issue" and commented on the NWPT that "Even if such a ban treaty is agreed upon, we don't think that it would lead to the solution of real security issues, such as the threat by North Korea. This is why we voted against the UN General Assembly resolution" (MOFA, March 27, 2017, p. 2, 5). In short, Japan as a nuclear-threatened state judged that the UNGA resolution to negotiate for the NWPT would not be effective to denuclearize the Korean Peninsula, and hence, the Japanese government eventually voted against it. In this sense, Japan's decision is based on the most fundamental national interest, namely national survival as argued by classical realists.

d) Neo-Realism: Japan as a "Nuclear-Umbrella State"

From a neo-realist perspective, foreign and security policies of sovereign states are influenced by the anarchic nature of an international system and a

hegemonic state (Waltz, 1959; Gilpin, 1981). Some defensive realists observed that proliferation of nuclear weapons could stabilize the international system (e.g. Waltz, 1981), and Japan might possess nuclear weapons for the purpose of self-defense (Waltz, 1993, 2000). From a viewpoint of offensive realism, it is considered that a state should maximize its power and seek to establish a regional hegemony (e.g. Measheimer, 2001), yet Japan decided not to acquire nuclear weapons. From a neo-realist perspective, the Japanese government has continued its military dependence on the U.S. nuclear umbrella based on the Japan-US Security Treaty (Tosaki & Hayashi, 2016, p. 24). In this respect, Japan's nuclear identity can be described as a "nuclear-umbrella state."

During the Cold War period, the United States introduced nuclear weapons into Okinawa under the control of the United States. In the 1960s, the United States deployed Mace B surface-launched cruise missiles capable of carrying nuclear warheads to Okinawa as a nuclear deterrent against communist countries, especially China (*Ryukyu Shimpo*, 2013, May 24). When the United States returned Okinawa to Japan, the so-called "secret agreements" regarding nuclear weapons were allegedly agreed by Prime Minister Eisaku Sato and President Richard Nixon in the event of contingencies (Okadome, 2010).

Moreover, the interpretation of the Three Non-Nuclear Principles differed between the Japanese government and the United States. While Prime Minister Sato declared "non-possession, non-production, and non-introduction" of nuclear weapons, the United States interpreted that the "transit" of nuclear weapons could be permitted. Although the Japanese government explained to the public that even "transit" of nuclear weapons is prohibited by the Three Non-Nuclear Principles, it is considered that the U.S. military planes or vessels equipped with nuclear weapons did pass through the territory of Japan (Tadokoro, 2011, pp. 102-103).

After Prime Minister Sato adopted the so-called Three Non-Nuclear Principles, the prime minister also announced the "Four Pillars of Nuclear Policy": a) adherence to the Three Non-Nuclear Principles, b) promotion of global nuclear disarmament, c) reliance on the U.S. nuclear deterrence, and d) promotion of the peaceful use of nuclear power, in the Plenary Session of the House of Representatives on 30 January 1968 (Ibid, p. 104). Thus, although Japan has adopted the "non-nuclear policy" as a "nuclear-bombed state," the government has relied on the U.S. nuclear umbrella, causing Japan's paradoxical nuclear identity.

In essence, the Japanese government has not changed its security policy that depends on the U.S. nuclear umbrella, which was reconfirmed in the 2015 Japan-U.S. Defense Guidelines that stipulated: "The United States will continue to extend deterrence to Japan through the full range of capabilities, including U.S. nuclear forces" (MOD, 2015). Accordingly, the nuclear posture of the U.S. government inevitably reflected on Japan's policy toward the NWPT. Although Japan is a "non-nuclear state" that holds the Three Non-Nuclear Principles, the dependence on the U.S. nuclear umbrella influences the decision of Japan as a U.S. ally and a "nuclear-umbrella state" (Kawasaki, 2017, p. 164).

As a matter of fact, it was reported that the United States placed "pressure" on its allies, including NATO member states and Japan, to oppose the UNGA resolution to begin negotiations for the NWPT. Before the voting, U.S. Disarmament Ambassador Robert Wood attempted to dissuade U.S. allies from voting for the resolution (*Nihon Keizai Shimbun*, 2016, October 29). According to *Japan Times*, the U.S. government sent a letter to its allies, pressuring them into voting against the resolution rather than merely abstaining (*Japan Times*, 2016, November 3).

In this light, *Sankei Shimbun* argued that the radical type of the Nuclear Weapons Prohibition Treaty is nonsense and would not prevent war and conflict from happening (*Sankei Shimbun*, 2016, 30 October). Similarly to the premise of neo-realism, the Japanese government explained that the “balance of international security” is significant for the security of Japan, and that the NWPT would jeopardize the power balance based on the US nuclear deterrence (*Asahi Shimbun*, 2016, November 26). All in all, the political stance of the Japanese government regarding nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation is consistent with the premise of neo-realism that it is difficult for sovereign states to contribute to international cooperation under the anarchic international system, unless there exists clear national interests in the cooperative action. From a structural realist perspective, therefore, it can be argued that the NWPT “could undermine the credibility of nuclear deterrence” (Perkovich, 2017, p. 11). For Japan as a nuclear-umbrella state, voting for the NWPT was considered to be an unrealistic action which could weaken the effectiveness of the nuclear deterrence of the United States.

Transforming Japan’s Nuclear Identity to Bridge the Gap

Through a lens of analytical eclecticism, Japan’s nuclear identity and its attitude toward the NWPT have been analyzed so far. Then, what are alternatives for the Japanese government to contribute to achieving a world without nuclear weapons? Although Japan’s nuclear identity as a “nuclear-threatened state” and “nuclear-umbrella state” were dominant in its opposition to the NWPT, it is still possible to strengthen its nuclear identity as a “nuclear-bombed state” and “nuclear disarmament state” toward nuclear abolition in the light of constructivism that premises “transformation of identity” for international cooperation (e.g. Wendt, 1992, pp. 415-418).

As one of the feasible alternatives, it is possible for the Japanese government to build a bridge between the nuclear-armed states and the NWPT supporters (e.g. Clements 2018). The Japanese government can encourage the United States to take a leadership role in the field of nuclear disarmament by the so-called “building blocks” approach. Also, the Japanese government will be able to pressure nuclear weapons states, especially the United States, to abide by the nuclear disarmament obligation of the NPT. In addition, it is important for Japan to facilitate harmonization of the NPT and the NWPT by encouraging nuclear states to take nuclear risk reduction measures (Sood, 2018). In this approach, the NWPT can be regarded as one of the final blocks to build after the CTBT and the FMCT in the nuclear abolition process.

At an international and global level, one of the key diplomatic options as a possible alternative pathway is the NPDI framework. The Japanese government can reinvigorate the NPDI as a diplomatic vehicle with other nuclear dependent states, such as Australia and Canada in cooperation with pro-NWPT states (Meyer, 2018, p. 9). In addition to the NPDI, the Japanese government will be able to promote the “Group of Eminent Persons for Sustainable Advancement of Nuclear Disarmament” which was held in Hiroshima on 27 and 28 November 2017. The Group of Eminent Persons was designed to discuss the current situation of nuclear disarmament and necessary measures toward nuclear abolition (MOFA, 2017, November 28). In the first meeting of the Group of Eminent Persons, the significance of the “minimization point” in the nuclear disarmament process was confirmed as a mutual possible halfway mark to the total elimination (MOFA, 2017, December 8). The Group of Eminent Persons should be a bridge between the nuclear and non-nuclear states and between the NPT-led nuclear disarmament and the NWPT-led nuclear abolition.

At a domestic and political level, Japanese policymakers need to stimulate public debate on Japan's role in nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament in several committees at the National Diet. This paper, therefore, suggests that Japanese parliamentary politicians should discuss Japan's role in nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament in terms of the NWPT. Although it is nearly impossible for the current Japanese government to sign and ratify the NWPT, Japanese lawmakers can consider possible policy compatibilities and incompatibilities of the NWPT with Japan's foreign and security policy. At an academic, educational, and individual level, Japanese scholars and educators can explain and highlight the prospects and challenges of the NWPT in their research and education. As pointed out by Mitsuru Kurosawa, it is "fundamentally necessary to change people's views on nuclear weapons by stigmatizing them" with regard to the NWPT (Kurosawa, 2018, p. 13). Therefore, nuclear disarmament education will be of significance to consider Japan's role in nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament as well as the implication of the NWPT for a world without nuclear weapons. These possible alternative policy options can be adopted by the Japanese government that can transform its nuclear identity to bridge the gap between the NPT regime and the NWPT framework toward a nuclear free world.

Conclusion

This paper has investigated Japan's nuclear identity in relation to the NWPT. As a relevant background, it was confirmed that the international conferences on humanitarian impact of the use of nuclear weapons were held in Norway, Mexico and Austria, and moreover, the OEWG was established to discuss the issue of the NWPT. As opposed to the international endeavor to establish a legally binding instrument to ban nuclear weapons, the political stance of the Japanese government has been uncooperative to the creation of the NWPT. In particular, Japan's opposition to the UNGA resolution to start negotiations for the NWPT surprised and even disappointed non-nuclear states, international NGOs, and peace activist groups. To examine the paradox of Japan's nuclear identity and the reasons why Japan opposed the NWPT, this study classified Japan's multiple nuclear identity in light of analytical eclecticism.

First, from a classical liberalist standpoint, this paper described Japan's nuclear identity as a "nuclear-bombed state" that naturally desires nuclear abolition. Theoretically, Japan as a nuclear-bombed state should have played a leading role in the negotiation conference for the NWPT, while sharing the humanitarian consequence of nuclear detonation. In this sense, it appears to be paradoxical for a nuclear-bombed state to oppose the NWPT. Second, in terms of a neo-liberal viewpoint, Japan's nuclear identity was defined as a "nuclear disarmament state" that supports a "nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime" based on the neo-liberal ideal of "international cooperation." In this respect, it is understandable that the Japanese government preferred a more "agreeable" resolution plan for nuclear abolition, rather than the NWPT. From a neo-liberal theoretical perspective, however, it was desirable for Japan as a nuclear disarmament state to support the NWPT.

Third, a classical realist perspective provided the persuasive reason that Japan did not agree to the NWPT. From the classical realist viewpoint, Japan's nuclear identity is a "nuclear-threatened state" that has been surrounded by three nuclear-armed states. Especially, the technology of North Korea's ballistic missiles and nuclear weapons has been improved through continuous experiments. This is why Japan as a nuclear-threatened state desires a world free from nuclear weapons,

including denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. In other words, the Japanese government did not agree to the NWPT which could benefit the nuclear strategy of North Korea.

Fourth, a neo-realist viewpoint explains that Japan as a “nuclear-umbrella state” opposed the NWPT, because Japan prioritized extended deterrence of the U.S. nuclear umbrella. It was moreover observed that Japan’s decision was influenced by U.S. pressure to oppose the resolution to negotiate for the NWPT. Thus, this paper has clarified that Japan’s nuclear identity has been fluctuating, and the United States eventually influenced Japan’s policy toward the NWPT. Whether the future Japanese government signs the NWPT or not depends on domestic and international factors as well as its nuclear identity.

As possible alternative pathways, this paper has suggested that the Japanese government needs to continue the “Group of Eminent Persons for Substantive Advancement of Nuclear Disarmament” in order to fill a gap between nuclear and non-nuclear states and between the two different but mutually supplemental nuclear disarmament approaches. It also proposes that Japanese policymakers, researchers, and educators facilitate domestic discussion on the NWPT in terms of Japan’s role in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, and strengthen disarmament education. Japan’s nuclear identity appears to be paradoxical regarding its decision on the NWPT, but through domestic and international discussion and disarmament education, the Japanese government should be able to lead a global nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament movement as the sole country to have ever suffered from nuclear bombings in human history.

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