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THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

**STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA
TO THE OPCW AT THE 101ST SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
UNDER AGENDA ITEM 6(B)**

Mr Chairman,

Several Japanese ACW-related issues will be considered under this subitem, including the destruction progress to be briefed on by China; consideration and adoption of the national paper jointly submitted by China and Japan on the destruction plan beyond 2022; and the report on the virtual visit to the Haerbaling destruction facility by an EC delegation and the DG on 15 September. I will now focus my statement on the destruction plan beyond 2022.

The early, thorough and complete destruction of the Japanese ACW has a direct impact on the safety of lives and property of the Chinese people and the ecological security in China. It represents Japan's political responsibility and international obligation in the process to implement the Convention and the MOU signed between the governments of China and Japan. According to the Convention, Japan should complete the ACW destruction in the 10th year after the Convention came into force, namely in 2007. Simultaneously, a grace period of 5 years was set in this regard. Since Japan had failed to meet the deadline by completing the destruction as planned for three times, the EC adopted decisions respectively in 2006, 2012 and 2017 to specify the new deadlines. In the current destruction plan, Japan undertakes to make every effort to complete the destruction of the Japanese ACWs buried at Haerbaling by the end of 2022 and of all the Japanese ACWs declared to the OPCW by the end of 2016. It appears now that this goal cannot be reached. Thus, the destruction is bound to fail to meet its deadline for the fourth time.

Recently, China and Japan carried out many rounds of consultation regarding the destruction plan of Japanese ACWs beyond 2022, and its text agreed upon by both sides has been submitted to the EC for consideration. In the new destruction plan, China and Japan confirm that they will accelerate the process of the disposal of Japanese ACWs in all aspects. And in the plan, Japan specifies the completion deadlines for various operations.

With regard to the destruction, the destruction of the Japanese ACWs buried at Haerbaling and all those declared to the OPCW before the end of 2022 will be completed by the end of 2027; and the destruction of the ACWs in Liaoyuan will start in early 2026, and will be finished as early as possible. In terms of the excavation and recovery, the medium- and long-term excavation and recovery operation plans for Jiamusi, Shangzhi and Hunchun will be formulated in 2023, and implemented to the greatest extent possible, and efforts will be made to complete the excavation and recovery of the ACWs in Mudanjiang, Yichun and Dunhua by the end of



2025. Japan also undertakes to work actively on improving its detection, excavation and recovery technologies, and make every effort to collect and timely provide to China the information on ACWs. Regarding the ACWs that will be declared to the OPCW and confirmed through joint investigation in the future, Japan will honour its obligation as an abandoning State Party under the Convention in earnest.

It is hoped that the plan will be adopted at this session. After that, the key will lie in its implementation. China strongly hopes that Japan will fulfil its responsibility and obligation in implementing the new destruction plan fully, completely and precisely, with the object of safely and thoroughly destroying ACWs at an early date, thus winning the trust from China and the international community with its tangible actions.

Mr Chairman,

China has submitted to the EC a written report on the latest progress in the destruction of ACWs. I would like here to elaborate mainly on some problems found in the work of the Japanese side.

Firstly, its inputs have been unevenly distributed. Haerbaling is so far the largest burial site of ACWs in China, but the ACWs there are certainly not all. The Japanese inputs have been limited in the mobile facility destruction, investigation and recovery. And there are considerable "inputs arrears" in the clue detection, investigation and identification of suspect ACWs.

Secondly, the progress in redressing difficult issues have been tardy. Taking Shangzhi for example, this burial site covers an area of around 9.6 million square metres, but so far, only 125,000 square metres have been subjected to excavation and recovery. At this pace, it would yet take more than 400 years to complete the job. For the burial sites in the Jiamusi section of Songhuajiang River and in Hunchun, it would also take several decades at the current rate to complete the operations there. As for Liaoyuan, no destruction technology and equipment have been even identified.

Thirdly, inputs have been highly inadequate. There haven't been enough Japanese operators. And for those available, they are quite often at the advanced age. That makes it impossible for them to meet the requirements of long-time operations and operate at various sites at the same time. On the excuse of budget constraints as well, Japan has been holding a passive attitude towards improving its technologies and equipment, which severely delays the operation process.

Fourthly, nearly no effective clue and information have been provided. Up to now, Japan has not provided comprehensive, detailed and accurate clues and information. As a result, China can only discover ACWs by chance, and deal with them on an emergency basis. That greatly increases the risk of ACWs causing human injuries once found, while badly delaying the process of their disposal.

In addition, since ACWs have been buried underground for decades, the soil contamination thus caused is severe. From the perspective of either the real threat posed by ACWs, or of the Convention and the relevant MOU between China and Japan, Japan should include the water and soil contaminated by the leakages from ACWs as the objects of destruction. China hopes that Japan will rectify its attitude, shoulder its responsibility and solve the problem of polluted soil at an early date.

Mr Chairman,

On 15 September, at the invitation of China and Japan, a virtual visit to China, on the theme of ACW destruction, was paid by the DG, Mr. Arias, the Chairman of the Council, Mr Atiyah, and the delegates of around 20 States Parties. The visit has served to deepen the understanding of the history, the hazard in reality and the process of the destruction of ACWs of all the parties involved, and helped make them more aware of the real harmfulness and the urgency and importance of the destruction. The report on the visit has also been submitted to the Council at this session for consideration.

As a State Party to the Convention and No. 1 victim of Japanese ACWs, China will as always fulfil its international obligation in earnest, and actively provide necessary assistance and facilitation to Japan for its operations. China hopes that the OPCW will continue to pay attention to the issue of Japanese ACWs, support China's legitimate demands, and carefully monitor and actively help accelerate the process of the disposal of ACWs.

The Chinese delegation requests that this statement be distributed as an official document of this session and published on the OPCW public website and extranet.

Thank you, Mr Chairman.

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