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THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

POSITION PAPER: CHEMICAL WEAPONS ABANDONED BY JAPAN IN CHINA

1. The complete and thorough destruction of abandoned chemical weapons within the deadline prescribed by the Chemical Weapons Convention (hereinafter “the Convention”) and under the effective verification of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) constitutes a basic obligation of the Abandoning State Party under the Convention. The early start and timely completion of destruction of abandoned chemical weapons have a direct bearing on the full realisation of the core objective of the Convention – total elimination of the threat of chemical weapons.
2. During its war of aggression against China, Japan used chemical weapons on many occasions, causing large numbers of deaths and injuries among the Chinese military and civilians. On the eve of its defeat, Japan abandoned large quantities of chemical weapons on the territory of China. After being buried for a long period of time, many of these Japanese abandoned chemical weapons (Japanese ACWs) are now deformed, damaged, or leaking. In recent years, more and more Japanese ACWs are being discovered in densely populated areas, near water sources, or in rivers. In the absence of any information on their burial, these discoveries are mostly chance encounters. There have been repeated incidences of casualty and environmental contamination caused by Japanese ACWs. This has posed a real threat and enormous danger to the life and property of the Chinese people, and to the ecological safety. The proper disposal and safe destruction of Japanese ACWs is thus a matter which must be addressed without delay.
3. The Chinese Government has always attached great importance to the issue of Japanese ACWs. China demands that Japan earnestly fulfil its obligations under the Convention, seriously implement the provisions of the Memorandum on the Destruction of Chemical Weapons abandoned by Japan in China signed by the Chinese and Japanese Governments, and provide all necessary financial, technical, expert, facility as well as other resources, in order to eliminate the danger and threat of Japanese ACWs at an early date. For its part, China has been earnestly implementing its obligations under the Convention as the Territorial State Party, and has made great efforts to assist Japan in all areas of work, such as on-site investigation, excavation and identification of Japanese ACWs, their safe storage, the identification



of destruction technology, and the design and preliminary preparations for the construction of destruction facility. With active facilitation from China, some progress has been made towards the disposal of Japanese ACWs.

4. Nevertheless, not even one piece of Japanese ACWs has been destroyed so far. There are large quantities of already discovered Japanese ACWs that call for urgent safe disposal. In view of the urgency of eliminating the grave danger of Japanese ACWs and of the requirement that destruction be completed by the deadline of 2012, China, while providing appropriate cooperation as always, urges Japan to properly conduct the following:
 - (a) Undertake to collect detailed information on the chemical weapons abandonment and provide it to China expeditiously to facilitate earlier and informed discovery, so as to minimise human casualty and environmental damage;
 - (b) Increase input to create conditions for the early completion of work relating to the design of the destruction facility, its safety and environmental evaluations, and the preliminary preparations of its construction;
 - (c) Speed up the process of work, complete expeditiously the recovery, identification and packaging of discovered ACWs, and give urgency to the construction of dedicated trust warehouses to ensure safety;
 - (d) Develop a practical and viable general destruction plan and timetable in accordance with the requirements of the Convention.
5. The Chinese Government attaches importance to and supports the positive and important role played by the OPCW in the process of dealing with the Japanese ACWs. The relevant storage and destruction process should be subject to the effective supervision and verification of the OPCW. The Chinese Government will continue to make declarations as required, give full support to on-site inspections, and take an active part with a constructive and pragmatic approach in the trilateral consultations among China, Japan and the Technical Secretariat to advance the process of destroying Japanese ACWs.