



JAPAN

REPORT ON THE CURRENT STATUS OF THE ACW PROJECTS IN CHINA IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL DECISION (EC-67/DEC.6) (REPORTING PERIOD: 1 JANUARY – 31 MARCH 2013)

1. Foreword

- 1.1 This is the update, in accordance with the Executive Council decision (EC-67/DEC.6), describing the progress in the abandoned chemical weapons destruction projects (ACW projects) in China from 1 January to 31 March 2013.
- 1.2 Japan is committed to fulfilling obligations under the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction (hereinafter referred to as “the Convention”) and continuing destruction of abandoned chemical weapons (ACWs) based on “the Destruction Plan for the Chemical Weapons Abandoned by Japan in the People’s Republic of China Beyond 29 April 2012” (attachment of EC-67/DEC.6, hereinafter referred to as “the Destruction Plan”) with the cooperation of China. Japan has invested enormous personnel and financial resources into the projects and made the best possible continuous efforts in tackling various challenges and uncertainties to achieve tangible progress.
- 1.3 The projects in 2012 achieved significant progress including the completion of the destruction operation in Nanjing (Jiangsu Province), the commencement of the destruction operation in Shijiazhuang (Hebei Province) and the launch of the excavation and recovery operations in Haerbaling (Jilin Province). Meanwhile, the reporting period for this report covers the winter suspension period in which ground works in northern China are suspended due to harsh weather conditions.

2. Characteristics of the ACW projects

- 2.1 The ACW projects entail various challenges. The projects start with the difficult tasks of excavation, recovery and identification of the ACWs among the recovered munitions mixed with those of other kinds. Excavation and recovery operations are conducted in a variety of locations such as mountainous areas, riverbeds and urban districts. Most ACWs are heavily corroded or deformed since they have remained under soil or water for a long time. Extra caution and care including the pre-destruction treatment are required throughout the process of the destruction.



2.2 Attaching the highest priority to the safety of the personnel and the protection of the environment is the most important prerequisite for carrying out the unprecedented projects, which sometimes include dangerous tasks, in a steady and safe manner.

2.3 Besides, Japan has to implement the projects in a manner consistent with Chinese laws and regulations, and Japan depends on the cooperation of China for various works such as preparation works (e.g. designing and construction of sites) and logistics (e.g. procurement of explosives, transport of ACWs, security), among others. Japan and China need to hold consultations on every aspect of the ground works as roles of both sides are intertwined with each other. Both sides need to cooperate through persevering consultations to resolve some issues. As safe and steady operations are carried out based on appropriate preparation works, the timing of the commencement of each destruction operation makes way for the conclusion of consultations on such works. Japan and China have jointly tackled a number of challenges in implementing the projects and resolved them through such consultations.

3. Suspension of the operations during the severe winter period

3.1 Japan and China, considering the risks of accident during the operations in harsh weather conditions are beyond permissible levels, set suspension period for the winter in northern China, including Shijiazhuang and Haerbaling.

3.2 Regardless of the suspension of ground works, Japan and China carry out activities such as maintenance works of the facilities, bilateral consultations on various topics for the further progress of the projects and preparations for the resumption of the works in and after spring.

4. Progress of the ACW projects during the reporting period

4.1 Destruction of ACWs with the Mobile Destruction Facility (MDF)

(a) Southern China

(i) Following the completion of the destruction operation in Nanjing in June 2012, Japan has been undertaking the disposal works of the contaminated waste, which is not the mandatory object for destruction under the Convention, based on bilateral consultation with China. Additional systems were installed for this purpose and some of them have been attached to the MDF in Nanjing. After the completion of all necessary works in Nanjing and the completion of remaining preparation works in Wuhan (Hubei Province), the MDF will be redeployed to Wuhan.

(ii) During the reporting period, the disposal works of the contaminated waste were carried out until the end of January and then the disposal systems underwent repair and adjustments. Bilateral consultations were held on topics such as disposal works of the contaminated waste, the schedule of the redeployment of the MDF and construction works in Wuhan.

(b) Northern China

In Shijiazhuang, the destruction operation was suspended for the winter from December 2012 until the end of March. During the reporting period, maintenance works of the MDF were carried out and a bilateral consultation was held on topics such as the schedule of the destruction operation.

4.2 ACW projects in Haerbaling

(a) Excavation and recovery

The excavation and recovery operations were suspended for the winter from December 2012 until the end of March. During the reporting period, bilateral consultations were held on topics such as a review of the work of the previous year, improvement of infrastructure and the schedule of works for this year.

(b) Destruction

(i) Preparations are ongoing for the launch of destruction operation. The manufacturing of the two destruction units (a detonation chamber and a static kiln detonation furnace) was completed in 2012.

(ii) During the reporting period, major parts of the aforementioned two destruction units arrived in China in the middle of March. Preparations including cost estimates for the contract of construction works of the buildings to house the destruction units were continued. Bilateral consultations were held on topics such as construction of buildings to house the destruction units and the schedule of the destruction operation.

4.3 Investigation, excavation and recovery operations in various areas

(a) During the reporting period, bilateral consultations were held on topics such as the schedule of on-site investigations as well as excavation and recovery operations this year.

(b) Japan commissioned the Chinese side to carry out an excavation operation in Guangzhou in March and eight suspected ACWs were reported. Bilateral on-site investigation of these items will be conducted in the future.

5. Measures for ensuring transparency and smoother implementation of the projects

5.1 Bilateral consultations

Japan attaches great importance to bilateral consultations with China as they are indispensable in order for the both States to move the projects forward considering the characteristics of the projects described above. On 5 March 2013 the 15th Japan-China Joint Working Group Meeting was held in Tokyo. At the meeting, both sides reviewed the projects in 2012 and highly appreciated the steady progress of the projects. Both sides also discussed future projects and decided to continue to cooperate and have close consultations.

5.2 Visit of the Executive Council representatives to destruction facilities

The Executive Council decision EC-67/DEC.6 describes that Japan and China “welcome visits of the Chairperson of the Council, the Director-General and a delegation representing the Council to destruction facilities”. Japan regards it important to realise such visits for better understanding of the status of the projects and further ensuring transparency. Japan and China are currently consulting on the appropriate time and place for the visit.

6. Conclusion

As described above, Japan, committed to fulfilling obligations under the Convention, has been making and will continue to make its fullest possible efforts to move the projects forward with the appropriate cooperation of China.

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