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**JAPAN**

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SPECIAL SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES TO REVIEW  
THE OPERATION OF THE CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION**

Mr Chairperson,  
Director-General and distinguished delegates,

First of all, I would like to congratulate you, Ambassador Agustín Vázquez Gómez of El Salvador, on your assumption as Chairperson of this Fourth Special Session of the Conference of the States Parties to Review the Operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention, and assure you of the cooperation from the Japanese delegation. I am confident that this Conference will be successfully guided under your excellent leadership.

I would also like to express my gratitude to Ambassador I Gusti Agung Wesaka Puja of Indonesia for his dedication as Chairperson of the Open-Ended Working Group for the Preparation of this Review Conference. Ambassador Puja's extraordinary skills were of tremendous value to the preparations for this Conference.

The Convention has made significant contributions to promoting international peace and security by achieving its wide accession, progressing comprehensive chemical disarmament, preventing the re-emergence of chemical weapons through its verification regime, and building confidence among the States Parties.

The Convention must continue to be fully implemented and consistent with its objectives in order to combat the on-going threats posed by chemical weapons, as embodied by the recent cases of their use, and in order to prevent the developments in science and technology from adversely contributing to the re-emergence of chemical weapons.

The Convention is a legal instrument which the States Parties established to make it serve the purpose of disarmament and non-proliferation, and is designed to keep on adapting to a changing security environment and the developments of science and technology. This Conference, therefore, should set out the future objectives and course of the OPCW. I would like to take this opportunity to highlight the priorities for the future of the OPCW and the possible course we should take.

For the last five years, steady progress has been made with the destruction of chemical weapon stockpiles. Japan welcomes the completion of the destruction of over 96.5% of the total of declared category 1 chemical weapons.



The abandoned chemical weapons (ACW) project is the most important commitment Japan has made to the Convention. This project has unprecedented difficulties, but Japan has made the utmost efforts, by investing enormous human and financial resources, for the progress in the destruction of ACW in China.

Last year, Japan and China established the destruction plan beyond the year 2016. We are determined to achieve the completion goal in accordance with this destruction plan.

Japan is encouraged by China's explicit expression of its willingness to extend their continuous cooperation. Japan highly appreciates each State Party's continuous understanding and support for the ACW project.

In order to obtain a deep understanding of this project among the States Parties and others, a panel exhibition dedicated to the project will be held in the lobby during this Conference. We would like to invite you to have a look at it. We are also going to host a side event in the same lobby at 6pm on 23 November after the meeting, and look forward to seeing many of you there.

Japan firmly denounces and cannot tolerate the use of chemical weapons by anyone, anytime, anywhere and under any circumstances. The perpetrators must be brought to justice.

In the Fourth Special Session of the Conference of the States Parties held in June this year, the States Parties decided to establish an arrangement in the OPCW to identify those who use chemical weapons. Japan attaches crucial importance to the full implementation of this decision. The decision better serves not only the identification of those responsible for use of chemical weapons, but also the deterrence from their use, thus may lead to reinforcing the Convention regime as a whole.

Japan highly evaluates the activities of various non-routine investigations, analyses and verifications by the OPCW, including the Fact-Finding Mission (FFM), the Declaration Assessment Team (DAT), and Technical Assistance Visit (TAV). It is important for the OPCW, as the Organisation dedicated to the prohibition of chemical weapons, to maintain and improve emergency-response capabilities against any alleged cases of chemical weapons use.

For the sake of international peace and security, it is extremely important to prevent the proliferation of sensitive toxic chemicals and their precursors, as well as their manufacturing techniques to States of concern and non-State actors. In this regard, it is required now more than ever to plug up geographical loopholes by integrating the non-States Parties into the framework of the Convention—namely North Korea, Egypt, Israel and South Sudan—early and without any precondition.

Full national implementation by each State Party including developing nations is indispensable to prevent toxic chemical substances from falling into the hands of non-State actors, such as terrorists. In this context, the measures taken by each State Party for the full national implementation should not be regarded as a constraint on economic growth but rather should be understood as a prerequisite to create a necessary social infrastructure for the development of domestic chemical industries. It is natural that chemical enterprises tend to hesitate to export their products to, and invest in, the States Parties whose national implementation infrastructure does not meet the standard required by the Convention, where

potential risk exists for their chemicals or technologies to be converted into chemical weapons.

The full, accurate and timely declaration is a prerequisite for effective verification systems, which function is to prevent the re-emergence of chemical weapons. Under the limited OPCW budget, it is important to select cost-effective capacity building projects, which can directly serve the purpose of a steady national implementation ensuring the submission of such declarations and assuring chemical safety and security. I would like to emphasise that once such projects are carried out, it is important to apply a system of PDCA cycle evaluation to each of them.

In light of global compliance to the Convention, especially regarding the prevention of the re-emergence of chemical weapons, we need to mobilise various actors to cooperate. In this context, I would like to point out the importance of education and outreach.

Both the Technical Secretariat and the States Parties should continuously pursue effectiveness and efficiency of the verification mechanism of the Convention. For instance, we cannot help but to face the reality of challenges and benefits posed by the developments in science and technology. We should keep an eye on newly-discovered chemicals so that they are not converted into a weapon, and at the same time we should endeavour to proactively study and utilise new technologies for inspections in remote areas where inspectors cannot access due to safety reasons, if appropriate.

In order to realise the aforementioned future roles of the OPCW, Japan invites the Technical Secretariat to continue its efforts to become a more compact, flexible and efficient Organisation, with the possible future introduction of artificial intelligence (AI), optimising its human and financial resources, while maintaining the knowledge management, as well as ensuring geographical and gender balance.

Our goals I just mentioned, ranging from the verification to international cooperation and assistance, cannot be achieved without financial support. The assessed contribution, which forms a large part of the budgetary revenue of the OPCW, is equal among the States Parties in a sense that its amount is determined based on the economic scale of each State Party. Its timely payment serves to strengthen the OPCW and is a visible contribution by the States Parties toward realising “a world free of chemical weapons” regardless of their economic sizes. For the past five years from 2014 to 2018, Japan has paid approximately 33.5 million Euros to fulfil its compulsory payment of assessed contribution and voluntarily contributed a total of around 6 million Euros to the Trust Fund to destroy chemical weapons in Syria.

It is indispensable that all the States Parties and the Technical Secretariat unite and work together for the Convention and the OPCW to keep adapting to the changing requirements to the on-going threats and the developments in science and technology, so as to realise our common goal of realising “a world free of chemical weapons”. I would like to encourage each State Party to keep up the spirit of cooperation.

Thank you.

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