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**PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA**

**STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA  
TO THE OPCW AT THE NINETY-SIXTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE  
COUNCIL ON THE ISSUE OF JAPANESE ACW**

Mr Chairperson,

On behalf of the Chinese delegation, please allow me to brief the Council on the progress of the Japanese ACW destruction and on China's positions on relevant matters.

Due to the impact of COVID-19, no Japanese ACW destruction, emergency handling, excavation, recovery, identification, and packing operations were conducted during the reporting period, thereby the number of the Japanese ACW destroyed remains the same as that reported for the preceding reporting period.

With respect to the destruction facilities in operation, China and Japan have agreed to resume destruction operations at Haerbaling and Harbin in May and August 2021, respectively. Currently, all the construction projects at Haerbaling are proceeding normally, with the anti-pandemic measures well in place. The following construction works have been completed: the main part of the supplementary section of the destruction facility, the second contaminant storehouse, the consolidated restoration, and the power expansion. The decoration and fittings as well as the construction of the auxiliary facilities will be resumed in March, and are expected to be completed by the end of September this year.

Regarding the destruction facilities under construction, China and Japan are in the process of consultations over such aspects as risk assessment, medical assurance, and environment monitoring concerning the high-mobility destruction operations in Guangzhou and Taiyuan. Meanwhile, preparations are under way for the construction of the two destruction facilities there.

In terms of the transportation of Japanese ACW, at Japan's request, China completed the following operations: from 11 October to 15 November 2020, transporting 2,474 items of hazardous waste and contaminants kept in the destruction facility in Shijiazhuang to the destruction facilities in Harbin and Haerbaling respectively; and from 2 November to 1 December 2020, transporting 276 items of Japanese ACW, 2 unknown shells, and 70 containers of contaminants stored in Hangzhou, Nanjing, Anqing, Changsha, Yueyang, and Danyang to the Wuhan Japanese ACW storehouse.

In addition, China and Japan have agreed on the following through consultations: the Japanese ACW identification and packing operations in Qiqihar, Heilongjiang Province, which had been originally planned in 2020, would be put off to 2021; China would update Japan about its



anti-pandemic requirements, which would serve as a reference for the latter for drawing up operation plans and its own anti-pandemic measures; and in view of the evolution of the pandemic in both countries during the winter of 2020, Japan has the concern that the operations in the first half of 2021 might encounter great difficulties, and is thus considering the feasibility of shifting the operations to the second half of the year. It hopes to have China's collaboration in that regard. China has asked Japan to provide concrete operational programmes as soon as possible for China's review.

Mr Chairperson,

Since the outbreak of COVID-19, the Japanese personnel were unable to travel to China, for a while, to conduct any operations. The Japanese ACW excavation, recovery, and destruction operations at Haerbaling, the destruction operation in the high-mobility facility in Harbin, and the excavation and recovery operations and identification and investigation operations at various sites were forced to a halt, and the working consultations between China and Japan were also suspended. In order to advance the process of destruction of the Japanese ACW, China has overcome plenty of difficulties and made huge efforts to minimise the negative impact of the pandemic.

Firstly, China has set up a video consultation mechanism with Japan. The topics for the consultation are being gradually expanded. The efficiency of the consultation is continuously improved, and its frequency is also gradually increased. All this has laid a key foundation for recommencing the operations in 2021.

Secondly, China has actively coordinated the resumption of the construction works at Haerbaling. China has conducted a large amount of research and internal coordination, and worked out a comprehensive and systematic programme for anti-pandemic prevention and control. On this basis, the various construction projects were resumed step by step at the Haerbaling facility in May 2020. The contractual companies have also made their utmost efforts to advance the works, on the precondition of their strict compliance with the anti-pandemic requirements.

Thirdly, China has actively assisted Japan in restarting the operations. As of the end of 2020, Japan began to send several batches of its staff to the destruction facilities at Haerbaling and Harbin for equipment maintenance. In light of this sensitive period of the evolving pandemic situation in both countries, China actively coordinated the efforts of its military, police, and disease control department to implement a strict quarantine, a close-loop management, and health monitoring for the inbound Japanese staff, so as to prevent the import of the coronavirus, and to ensure the safety of the Japanese personnel to the greatest extent possible.

Mr Chairperson,

The complete destruction of CWs chemical weapons of all the categories, including Japanese ACWs, constitutes a core objective of the work of the OPCW. It is also an important and indispensable part of the endeavour to create "a world free from chemical weaponsCWs". In the process of the disposal of Japanese ACWs, China has invested huge quantities of human and material resources, and provided to Japan its full assistance and support in all respects. In general, China and Japan have maintained their good cooperation.

Japan undertook to complete, by the end of 2022, the destruction of the Japanese ACW buried at Haerbaling and those across China declared to the OPCW before 2016. In spite of the greater challenge in destruction caused by the COVID-19, China and Japan have, through video conferencing, telephone, and email, maintained their close communication on the arrangements for the next steps of work. China is prepared to work together with Japan in continuously and closely monitoring the pandemic situation, as well as readjusting and improving in a timely manner the anti-pandemic measures for the operations at various sites, in order to have the operations resumed steadily and ensure their progress safely and smoothly.

Thank you, Mr Chairperson.

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