



JAPAN

Statement

by

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Mr Chairperson,
Director-General,
Distinguished delegates,

Let me re-assure you, Executive Council Chairperson, Ambassador Ziad M.D. Al Atiyah, of the full support from the Japanese delegation. I would also like to thank the Director-General for his statement.

Mr Chairperson,

Japan reiterates that any use of chemical weapons anywhere, at any time, by anyone, under any circumstances is unacceptable, and those responsible must be held accountable.

Regarding the cases in which the Fact-Finding Mission reports concluded that there were reasonable grounds to believe that chemical weapons were used in Syria, I understand that the Secretariat is working on the investigation in a professional and impartial manner. Japan looks forward to the next report.

Japan continues to urge Syria to ensure accountability by addressing all outstanding issues identified by the DAT.

Regarding the poisoning of Mr Alexei Navalny, Japan urges the States Parties concerned, particularly Russia on whose territory the attack took place, to cooperate for prompt clarification of the case of the chemical weapons use.

Possibility or threat of the use of chemical weapons is grave concern. Japan condemns Russia's aggression against Ukraine, which not only poses a serious challenge to the United Nations Charter which is enshrined in the Convention, but also might trigger the possibility or threat of the use of chemical weapons. In this regard, Japan welcomes the Secretariat's efforts in closely monitoring the situation in Ukraine and, in collaboration with the UN, preparing to react in case

of an incident involving chemical warfare agents or toxic industrial chemicals.

Mr Chairperson,

In light of the intensive discussion in the course of the introduction of the biennial budget that was adopted last year for the first time, Japan believes that only unexpected conditions that significantly jeopardise the core activities of the Organisation would justify adjusting the budget of the second year of the biennium. In this regard, we understand that the draft revised budget for 2023 is aimed at responding to the impact of unforeseeable significant inflation and the security requirements. We support the draft revised budget, which maintains the activities required for the OPCW to fulfil its mandate, without any change to the assessed contributions by utilising 2020 cash surplus. Meanwhile, the transition to the principle of Zero Real Growth should not be taken for granted, and thus we expect to see further ingenuity that will not affect the assessed contributions in the next biennial budget cycle.

We expect the Secretariat achieves significant progress in its initiative to collect the arrears, especially from those that are one or more years in arrears, otherwise the arrears would result in accumulating even if an increase of assessed contributions were to be decided.

Mr Chairperson,

Japan continues to undertake every effort for, and commits itself firmly to, the abandoned chemical weapons (ACWs) destruction project in China. Japan, in fact, has collected approximately 90,000 items and completed the destruction of about 60,000 of them. Japan has already spent approximately 3 billion euros from its own account.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we were forced to postpone all destruction activities of ACWs from April 2020 onwards. However, the Haerbaling Large Chambers will be operational this month. The

destruction operations in Harbin and the excavation and recovery operations at other sites have also been resumed. And last month, for the first time in three years, Japan and China, under the cooperation of the Secretariat, co-hosted a virtual EC visit to the destruction facilities of ACWs. We hope that participants could obtain a clearer picture of Japan's serious commitments through first-hand information on the progress of the project. We will report on the progress of the ACW project in detail under the relevant agenda item. Japan agreed with China on the destruction plan beyond the year 2022. We hope that this plan will be adopted during this session.

Mr Chairperson,

Amidst the ever-changing security environment and the developments in science and technology, it is imperative to jointly and effectively tackle the threat posed by the use of chemical weapons. In this respect, Japan continues to actively contribute to the Open-Ended Working Group for the preparation of the Fifth Review Conference in our capacity as one of the Vice Chairs.