



JAPAN

Statement

by

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Mr. Chairperson,
Director-General,
Distinguished delegates,

First of all, please allow me to start by assuring you, Chairperson of the Executive Council, Ambassador Lucian Fătu, of the full support from me and my delegation. Also, let me express my gratitude to Director-General Ambassador Fernando Arias for his statement.

Mr. Chairperson,

We welcome the fourth report of the Investigation and Identification Team (IIT) which concludes that there are reasonable grounds to believe units of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) deployed sulfur mustard. Once again, Japan commends the professional, impartial and independent work conducted by the IIT. As a country that suffered chemical terrorism in 1994 and 1995, we are deeply concerned over the use of chemical weapons by non-state actors. Therefore, Japan cannot overemphasize the importance of ensuring the capability to swiftly respond to any cases of chemical weapons use. The international community should work together in the fight against impunity in connection with chemical weapons use.

With regard to the Syrian chemical weapons dossier, Japan welcomes the twenty-sixth round of consultations with the participation of all Declaration Assessment Team (DAT) members, which was held from January to February. Japan expects that tangible results should be made and strongly urges Syria to ensure accountability for the incidents in which the use of chemical weapons were confirmed, through full cooperation with the activities of the Technical Secretariat, including the DAT.

We were highly disturbed by the news of the sudden death of Mr. Alexei Navalny, and regarding his poisoning with the use of a chemical nerve-agent of the “Novichok” group, Japan strongly urges Russia to cooperate and provide a prompt clarification of this case.

The possible use or threat of use of chemical weapons in Ukraine is also of grave concern. Japan expresses concern over the announcement by the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine that Russia has used riot control agents on Ukrainian territory as a method of warfare. In this regard, Japan welcomes the Technical Secretariat's efforts to closely monitor the situation in Ukraine and to provide assistance and protection to Ukraine, since these activities serve to provide rapid protective measures and fact-finding in response to any case of an incident involving chemical weapons. Taking this opportunity, I would like to inform you that Japan decided to contribute to the ongoing assistance and protection against chemical weapons for Ukraine by providing Detection, Identification and Monitoring equipment.

Mr. Chairperson,

The abandoned chemical weapon (ACW) project in China is one of the most important issues in the Convention for Japan. Japan has been making the utmost efforts for the progress of the destruction of ACW in China. As of 31 January 2024, Japan has collected approximately 115,000 items and completed the destruction of approximately 88,000 of them. Japan has been making the best possible efforts for the steady implementation of the destruction plan beyond the year 2022 while appreciating the appropriate cooperation with China. Japan and China have been discussing on a medium to long term plan of the excavation and recovery based on Japan's draft and held several consultations so far. We hope to see an early agreement for that plan.

Mr. Chairperson,

Japan invites the Secretariat to continue its efforts to become a more effective and efficient organization that is composed of highly qualified professionals ensuring as wide a geographical basis as possible and gender balance while reinforcing knowledge management.

Mr. Chairperson,

Industrial inspections are of importance among the discussions of the implementation of the Convention. Japan will be actively participating in the on-going discussions at the industrial clusters, in order to consider concrete measures for sustainable and efficient industrial inspections.

Mr. Chairperson,

Japan urges the Secretariat to continue to make efforts for achieving the full universality of the Convention. We reiterate the importance of maintaining the readiness for the accession of States not Parties, in particular those who may accede to the Convention as possessor States.

Mr. Chairperson,

It is important that all States Parties must stand together in order to effectively deal with the threat of the use of chemical weapons amidst the ever-changing security environment and advances in science and technology. Japan expects that all States Parties unite to work together in the spirit of cooperation and reiterate our commitment to the Convention.

I request that this statement should be made an official document of the 105th session of the Executive Council, and be published on the OPCW external server and the public website.