



JAPAN

Statement

by

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Mr. Chairperson,
Director-General,
Distinguished delegates,

First of all, please allow me to start by welcoming you, Mr. Chairperson, Ambassador Andrés Terán Parral to the newly constituted Executive Council. You have my full support and that of my delegation. Also, let me express my gratitude to Director-General Ambassador Fernando Arias for his statement.

Mr. Chairperson,

Developments in science and technology, particularly in the field of Artificial Intelligence (AI) are advancing at an unprecedented pace. AI has the potential to support the OPCW for our common goal of realizing a world where the possibility of the use of chemical weapons is completely excluded, including preventing the re-emergence of chemical weapons. On the other hand, we should seriously consider the downside risk, which is that terrorists could invent new toxic chemicals using advanced technologies such as AI. In this regard, we support the initiative of DG Arias on holding events to gather insight from scientific experts on the current AI landscape and its prospects, while also fostering a deeper understanding of associated risks and opportunities. In addition, we welcome the Global Conference on the Role of Artificial Intelligence in Advancing the Implementation of the Convention in Morocco. We are positively considering to send participants to the conference to contribute to the discussion of the role of AI in the implementation of the Convention.

Mr. Chairperson,

The use of chemical weapons in Syria is of grave concern to the peace and security of the international community. Japan condemns the Syrian Government's use of chemical weapons. Japan also notes the content of the fourth report of the Investigation and Identification Team (IIT). Once again, Japan commends the professional, impartial

and independent work conducted by the IIT. The 27th of June marks the 30th anniversary of the Matsumoto Sarin attack in Japan, which is an unprecedented chemical terrorist attack in an urban area that killed 8 people and harmed more than 140 people. We would like to express our condolences to the victims and renew our determination to eradicate the use of chemical weapons by anyone including non-state actors. In light of our experiences to deal with chemical terrorism, Japan cannot overemphasize the importance of ensuring the capability to swiftly respond to any cases of chemical weapons use. In addition, the international community should continue to work together in the fight against impunity in connection with chemical weapons use.

With regard to the Syrian chemical weapons dossier, Japan is concerned over the latest report stating that the total number of outstanding issues was increased to 26, of which 19 issues remain unresolved. Japan 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.

Regarding the poisoning of Mr. Alexei Navalny with the use of a chemical nerve-agent of the “Novichok” group, Japan continuously urges Russia to cooperate and provide a 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 reports that Russia has used riot control agents on Ukrainian territory as a method of warfare. In this regard, we request Russia to clarify the situation and the Executive Council to assist in clarifying the matter related to reports indicated that Russian armed forces are using RCA as a method of warfare against Ukrainian forces. Japan welcomes that Ukraine has fulfilled its internal procedures necessary for the Ad hoc Agreement between Ukraine and the Technical Secretariat of the OPCW on Privileges and Immunities for Technical Assistance Visits (TAV) to enter into force. This enabled the Technical Secretariat to

carry out the TAV, which consisted in the delivery of 70 detectors. We hope that this will contribute to the protection of Ukrainian citizens from the threat of chemical agents.

Mr. Chairperson,

The abandoned chemical weapons (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 May 2024, Japan has collected approximately 116,000 items and completed the destruction of approximately 92,000 of them. In September 2024, Japan and China are honored to host an Executive Council visit regarding the ACW project in China. The visit signifies a joint effort made by both states. 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. We will provide detailed briefing during this session.

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 106th session of the Executive Council, and be published on the OPCW external server and the public website.