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JAPAN

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR MASARU TSUJI
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TWENTIETH SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES**

Mr Chairperson,
Director-General,
Distinguished delegates and friends,

First, I would like to congratulate you, Ambassador Eduardo Ibarrola-Nicolín, on your election as Chairperson of this session of the Conference of the States Parties.

Let me start with the important progress made this year.

The Chemical Weapons Convention is often said to be one of the most successful disarmament conventions, whose objective is total elimination of an entire class of weapons of mass destruction. We are glad to see the steady progress this year;

First, 90% of the total declared chemical weapons had been verified by the Organisation as destroyed, which leads us one step closer to our ultimate objective. We welcome this progress and appreciate the efforts by the States Parties concerned.

Second, we have witnessed one more step forward on universality of the Convention. Myanmar and Angola have joined the Convention. Japan appreciates the efforts by the States Parties and the Technical Secretariat to promote the universality of the Convention. At the same time, we would like to stress that, the States Parties should make concerted efforts to encourage the remaining States not Parties to the Convention to join the Convention.

To ensure that the OPCW, based on those achievements, continues to discharge its important responsibility under the Convention while adapting to a changing international security environment and facing the recent security challenges such as terrorism, we believe it is timely to start engaging in the discussion on the future direction of the Organisation. We had a constructive discussion in the retreat meeting in October. We appreciate the initiative taken by the Director-General and we will continue to participate actively in this collective effort.

Next I turn to the chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic.



While we welcome progress on the destruction of chemical weapons and chemical weapons production facilities (CWPF), we should continue to be seized to address the remaining important issues.

In particular, on the initial declaration by the Syrian Arab Republic, we still have reason for concern regarding its accuracy and completeness. We would, again, like to urge the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic to double its efforts to sincerely fulfil the obligations of the Convention and fully cooperate with the Declaration Assessment Team.

Turning to the issue of alleged use of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic, since the first Fact-Finding Missions report was issued last year, the international community has addressed the issue with strong sense of urgency, by adopting the decisions of the Executive Council and the resolutions of the United Nations Security Council including the one that had established the OPCW-UN Joint Investigative Mechanism.

During the latest special meeting of the Executive Council, we had briefings on three reports by the FFM. Japan highly commends the work of the Mission for its dedication and the quality of reports despite the very volatile security situation.

Based upon its extensive research and analysis of the recent reports, the FFM came to the grave conclusion that toxic chemicals have once again been used as a weapon in the Syrian Arab Republic in spite of strong condemnation of the international community. Japan reiterates its serious concern regarding those findings.

Japan supports the activities of the JIM and the FFM's full cooperation with the JIM. We urge all parties directly related to its activities including the Syrian Arab Republic, to strengthen cooperation with the Technical Secretariat for facilitating the work of the Mission. Those who are responsible for the use of chemicals as weapons should be identified and brought to justice.

Now I would like to touch upon a couple of issues which deserve special attention for enhancing the effectiveness of the Convention.

First, establishing the national implementation measure is one of the fundamental obligations of the States Parties. It is indispensable for all the States Parties to fully establish their national implementation system including, but not limited to, legislation that covers all initial measures. At the same time, multifaceted efforts such as promoting capacity building of personnel for National Authorities are necessary for ensuring the effective implementation.

Furthermore, as increased threats caused by use of chemical weapons by non-State actors including terrorist are ever becoming imminent, we would like to stress that enhancing national implementation measures is a key for addressing those new challenges.

Second, on the Programme and Budget of the OPCW for 2016, we appreciate the efforts by the Secretariat. In order to maintain an effective and efficient budget within the limited resources of the Organisation and to make the budget transparent and accountable, it is important to constantly review the priorities among the various programmes, while adapting to the evolving situation. It is important to maintain a healthy and sustainable financial basis of the Organisation to ensure that it continues to discharge its responsibility. Therefore, the

Conference needs to closely monitor non-payment of assessed contributions and reimbursements.

Let me touch upon an issue of central nervous system (CNS)-acting chemicals.

Japan takes due note that this issue has drawn the attention of many States Parties in the past years.

We would like to express that Japan is neither developing, producing, stockpiling nor using CNS-acting chemicals for law enforcement purposes. We will continue to closely follow the discussion on this issue with interest.

Last but not least, Mr Chairperson, let me touch upon an important issue for Japan, the abandoned chemical weapons (ACWs).

The destruction of ACWs is one of the most important commitments Japan has made under the Convention, the projects have made notable progress through cooperation between Japan and China.

Japan and China received the Executive Council representatives and the Director-General at the Haerbaling site in June this year. Through the first-hand information the participants had during the visit, we are confident that this visit further promoted a good understanding about the current situation of the site, the progress of the ACW projects and also of the close on-site cooperation between Japan and China.

The progress of the ACW projects has been made with the valuable on-site cooperation between Japan and China. I would like to reiterate that, without the constructive cooperation and close coordination between Japan and China, these unprecedented difficult projects could not have been carried out. We reaffirm our commitment to exert the greatest possible effort for the early and complete destruction of ACWs with the adequate cooperation of China.

In order to promote correct understanding, a photo and video exhibition on the ACW project is being held here at the World Forum during the Conference. We will also host a side event on the ACW project in the lobby next to the Assembly hall after tomorrow's session, we would like to invite all of you for this side event.

Finally, Mr Chairperson, I would like to reassure you of the support of our delegation to ensure the successful conduct of the Conference.

Thank you for your attention.

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