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JAPAN

**STATEMENT BY H.E. MR MASARO TSUJI
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF JAPAN TO THE OPCW AT THE
SEVENTY-FIFTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Mr Chairperson,
Director-General,
Distinguished delegates,

Let me begin by welcoming you, Ambassador Horin, back to the Chair of this regular session of the Executive Council.

Mr Chairperson, we are confident that, under your able leadership, this session of the Council will produce substantial progress especially on the issues of urgent concern to all of us. I assure you of my delegation's support and cooperation. And, given the limited time allocated for a general statement, I will limit myself to a few points of importance to us.

The OPCW has been making constant progress in the area of destruction of chemical weapons. The completion of destruction of Category 1 chemical weapons in Libya is a good example of this progress. We believe that the award of the Nobel Peace Prize to the OPCW demonstrates the recognition of this kind of continuous efforts that the OPCW has been making. We should continue to live up to the high expectations of the international community towards the Convention and this Organisation.

On the Syrian chemical weapons, first of all, I would like to thank the Director-General and Ms Kaag, Special Coordinator, for the valuable reports in the outset of this session. As have been shared by many previous speakers, the Syrian Arab Republic should fulfill its responsibilities to ensure the removal of its chemical weapons material to enable the destruction within the timeline set out in the relevant Executive Council decisions. The international community has been continuously supporting this endeavour to achieve that goal, destruction of Syrian chemical weapons materials. In this regard, Japan highly appreciates efforts by the Technical Secretariat and the OPCW-UN Joint Mission for their dedication and professionalism, and the support provided by States Parties.

Last week I exchanged letters with the Director-General. Japan has donated EUR 13.25 million to a special OPCW Trust Fund for the destruction of Syrian chemical weapons. The time left is limited. The destruction process shall be accelerated and be completed with a great sense of urgency. The progress that we have seen so far fails to meet the expectations of the international community. The priority chemicals have not been removed systematically. And the consultations on the destruction methods for the 12 CWPfS



have not resulted in tangible progress. Like most delegations we have strong concerns about the current situation. We urge the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic to make the best use of the time left.

We take note of the various reports and assessments by the Director-General and Special Coordinator Ms Kaag of the Joint Mission, especially, the assessment expressed in the letter of the United Nations Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council, on 27 January, and most recently the reports this morning of the Director-General and Ms Kaag. Japan will continue to monitor the progress of the situation closely.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic has proposed the revised timelines, but what is important is that the proposed timelines shall serve for the complete destruction by the timeline set out in the Executive Council decisions. Japan supports the elements stressed by the Security Council on 6 February and urges once again the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic to implement the Executive Council decisions and fulfill the obligation of the Convention, and to transport chemicals to Latakia in a systematic and sufficiently accelerated way, while ensuring the security of all the staff.

In this context, the Council needs to monitor the development of shipments closely by, perhaps, increasing the frequency of reports from the Director-General to the Council members.

On the chemical weapons production facilities, Japan is of the view that the CWPFs need to be physically destroyed in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Convention. An agreement on the destruction method for the 12 CWPFs shall be reached as soon as possible, while taking note of the original date 15 March. In this we support the draft decision proposed by the United States of America. And we should closely monitor the execution of the destruction of the CWPFs both in methodology and timewise.

Now I turn to the question of 'universality', under the current international security situation, the risk of proliferation of chemical weapons still remains. Japan appreciates the efforts by the Technical Secretariat to promote the universality of the Convention, but further efforts should be made for the States not Party to join the Convention.

In the Asian region, there remain States not Party. We would like to work with the Technical Secretariat and other delegations in promoting universality, especially in the Asian region.

Briefly on international cooperation, Japan highly appreciates the efforts by the Technical Secretariat to conduct a number of programmes based on the decision at the Sixteenth Session of the Conference of the States Parties. We see that the cooperation for economic and technological development is important for enhancing domestic implementation measures of the States Parties. On our part, we are going to host trainees of the Associate Programme once again in 2014.

We see the merit of a constructive and practical approach. For effective and efficient implementation of Article XI, it is important first to review and evaluate those programmes that the Technical Secretariat has conducted to date.

On Article VI, in particular, of declarations as indicated in the outcome document of the Third Review Conference, in order for the verification regime to function effectively and efficiently, it is necessary for all States Parties to make accurate and complete declarations under Article VI without delay.

According to the Director-General's report on the timely submission of Article VI declarations, we can see some improvements, but we believe that there is still room for improvement. Those States Parties that have not established the effective national system for industry declarations are encouraged to do so as soon as possible.

The subject of abandoned chemical weapons (ACW) is one of the most important commitments of Japan under the Convention. Japan has been making utmost efforts to destroy ACWs in China in accordance with the decision at the Sixty-Seventh Session of the Executive Council. Japan has invested enormous resources in the ACW destruction projects. The projects have achieved significant progress despite the challenges and uncertainties.

For the sake of full transparency, Japan considers it important to provide the Council with updates on the progress made in the ACW destruction projects. My delegation will give a detailed explanation on the progress at the time appointed for that in this Executive Council Session.

The steady progress of the ACW projects has been made with the valuable on-site cooperation extended by the Government of China. We would like to emphasise that the unprecedented and extremely challenging projects can only be carried out through close coordination and cooperation between Japan and China. In this respect, Japan reaffirms its commitment to continue its fullest possible efforts to move the projects forward with the cooperation of the Government of China.

Lastly, I would like to repeat our deep appreciation for all your efforts and dedication. I would also like to request that this statement be circulated as an official document of this session of the Council.

Thank you, Mr Chairperson.

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