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JAPAN

Statement

by

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and

Permanent Representative of Japan to the OPCW

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Mr Chairperson,

Let me begin by welcoming you, Ambassador Moerzinger, back to the Chair of the Executive Council. We are confident that, under your able leadership, this session of the Council will produce substantial progress. I assure you of my delegation's full support and cooperation.

Let me take this opportunity to extend my warm welcome to the newly appointed directors, Mr. Philippe Denier, for Verification, and Mr. William Amoroso, for Administration.

I would like to start with the very important issue for the Organisation, namely, the issue of the Syrian chemical weapons.

It has been our strong belief that it is important to eliminate the Syrian chemical weapons materials and to destroy the Chemical Weapons Production Facilities as soon as possible in order to ensure regional stability and to promote the elimination of weapons of mass destruction. We are pleased to note that the destruction process outside the territory of the Syrian Arab Republic is now very close to its completion-chemical weapons have been removed from the Syrian Arab Republic and 97.6% of the chemicals have been destroyed. We extend our appreciation to the international community that has provided assistance, the OPCW-UN Joint Mission, and of course the Secretariat for its work.

Having said that, there are still tasks remained to be done. It is necessary for this Council to continue to be fully engaged in finishing up these remaining tasks in order to live up to its responsibilities under the convention and to the expectation of the international community.

First, the chemical weapons production facilities in the Syrian Arab Republic should be physically destroyed in accordance with the schedule in the relevant decision. In order to monitor the status of its implementation, it is essential that the Council continues to be updated on this matter in detail.

Second is the issue of the initial declaration by the Syrian Arab Republic. In order to assure the full implementation of the obligation to destroy the CW material in the Syrian Arab Republic completely and also to retain the confidence of the international community, it is fundamental that any questions regarding the accuracy and completeness of the initial declaration must be clearly addressed. Japan, therefore,

appreciates the Status Report of the Activities of Declaration Assessment Team (EC-77/P/S/1, dated 2 October 2014) and reiterates its supports to the activities of the Secretariat to complete the data regarding the initial declaration and to provide further information on “pending issues and concerns” specified in the Report.

With regard to the 2nd Report of the Fact Finding Mission on the use of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic, as I expressed to the Council at its 45th meeting, we have grave concerns about the situation. Those elements in the report lead to a simple belief that activities in contravention of the CWC have been carried out repeatedly in an organized way. Under any circumstances, the use of chemical materials as weapon is strictly prohibited under this Convention. And my government strongly condemns the attacks using chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic.

In this regard, Japan reiterates its supports for the continuation of the work of the Fact Finding Mission. If we let these pass without any consequence, the credibility of this organization and the Convention will be seriously undermined. Therefore, the EC, as the executive organ of the Convention, should discuss what kind of measures we should take against this situation. At the same time, the Syrian Arab Republic must be held accountable for providing thorough information.

Regarding the retention of samples of Syrian chemical weapons, we support the Draft Decision on this matter so that the Secretariat could use them as a reference in the future conduct of its mission.

Mr Chairperson,

Turning to other major issues in front of us, I would like to touch on several matters, in particular, with regard to how we can further improve the effectiveness of the Organization.

On verification, in order to prevent any use of chemical weapons in the future, it is essential for us to strengthen the efforts for the enlargement of membership, and the universality of the Convention. Especially, under the current international security situation, the risk of proliferation of chemical weapons to non-state actors remains high. Japan appreciates the efforts by the Secretariat to promote the universality of the Convention, and believes that further effort needs to be made both by the Secretariat and the States Parties to encourage and assist States not Party to join the Convention. In this context, in order to promote universality by providing technical assistance, Japan

sent an expert of the National Authority to the mock industry inspection conducted in Myanmar in August and we shared our experience as a State Party which receives a number of industry inspections. We believe that this has promoted the understanding of the government organs and other stakeholders from Myanmar regarding the implementation of the Convention.

We believe that this will positively contribute to the deliberations about future participation of Myanmar to the OPCW. I would like to take this opportunity to express our readiness to provide assistance for the early conclusion of the CWC by Myanmar.

On National Implementation, promoting national implementation is one of the most important steps to enhance the effective implementation of the Convention. Bearing in mind that many States Parties have been receiving industry inspections and that way contributing enormously to the confidence-building among States Parties, national implementation, including submitting accurate and complete declaration, is particularly important not only to maintain credibility of the Convention, but also to ensure the fairness among States Parties.

While we welcome the fact that there has been some progress in national implementation, we note with concern that 41 % of States Parties have yet to establish legislations that cover all initial measures. Further efforts are required.

On our part, Japan has been providing assistance in the framework of the Associate Programme, namely, up until now, we have received 20 trainees from States Parties in the Asian region in our chemical industry installations in order to assist emerging countries in the national implementation of the Convention.

We will contribute to share our expertise and experience as much as possible with States Parties that may need assistance. Those States Parties that have interest are kindly requested to get in contact with us for assistance.

On the programme and budget for 2015, we appreciate the efforts by the Secretariat to streamline the cost, and make the budget proposal even more reasonable with sense of priority.

In implementing the budget, Japan welcomes that the Secretariat has introduced a budget-tracking mechanism and expects that the Secretariat continues to enhance its use for the effective implementation of budget.

Also, in the future budget formulation, we expect that the Secretariat continues to enhance the RBM and the use of standard costing in order to reflect more accurately the

necessary resources.

Japan is ready to assist the Secretariat to work with the precision and effectiveness of its work. We believe that the ERP related draft decisions submitted to this Council serve for this purpose, and therefore, we express our support to the decisions.

Regarding the Draft Decision on rehiring of inspectors, Japan believes that it is important for the Organisation to retain the knowledge and expertise on the verification of chemical weapons.

Mr Chairperson,

Lastly, let me touch upon an important issue for Japan, the abandoned chemical weapons (ACW).

The destruction of ACW is one of the most important commitments of Japan under the Convention. In accordance with the decision at the Sixty-Seventh Session of the Executive Council, Japan has been making utmost efforts to destroy ACWs in China, including investing enormous resources in the ACW destruction.

Although these ACW projects entail various challenges and uncertainties, the projects have been making steady progress. For example, in Shijiazhuang, the ACW destruction using the Mobile Destruction Facility (MDF) has been resumed in September. In Wuhan where the MDF has been installed, the preparatory work for the destruction site has been under way. In Haerbaling, tireless efforts are being made with the target to start the test destruction in November.

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 after the last regular Council Session 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 bring the projects forward with the cooperation of the Government of China.

Mr Chairperson,

I would like to reiterate our deep appreciation for all your efforts and dedication, and 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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