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JAPAN

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR MR HIROSHI INOMATA
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF JAPAN TO THE OPCW
AT THE EIGHTY-SECOND SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Madam Chairperson,
Director-General,
Distinguished delegates,

I would like to join with other delegations to congratulate you, Ambassador Mrs Odette Melono, on your assumption as Chairperson of the Executive Council. We are confident that, under your able leadership, this session of the Council will make substantial progress. I also would like to echo the previous speakers to express our appreciation for the Director-General Mr Ahmet Üzümcü, for his remarkable works.

Let me start with the situation related to the chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic.

On the initial declaration by the Syrian Arab Republic, we appreciate the Director-General and the Technical Secretariat for the efforts of recent engagements with Syria and delivering the latest report by the Declaration Assessment Team (DAT). It is regrettable that the new report significantly increased our concern. There are still so many unresolved issues which indicate discrepancy and lack of accuracy and completeness. Furthermore, it is noted “the number of outstanding issues requiring clarification has increased steadily over time.” We would like to stress that, in order to assure the full implementation of the obligation to destroy the chemical weapons, any concerns and doubts regarding the accuracy and completeness of the initial declaration must be clearly and comprehensively addressed. Therefore, we would like to once again urge the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic to redouble its efforts to sincerely fulfil the obligations of the Convention by fully cooperating with the DAT.

I also wish to touch upon the issues of alleged use of chemical weapons in Syria.

Needless to say, use of chemical weapons cannot be allowed by anyone under any circumstances or for any reason. In this context, we are deeply concerned about recent report which suggests the possible use of sarin in Syria in April this year. Japan fully supports the work of the OPCW-UN Joint Investigative Mechanism (JIM), and the Fact-Finding Mission’s full cooperation with the JIM. We also urge all parties directly related to its activities, including the Syrian Arab Republic, to strengthen cooperation with the Secretariat for facilitating the work of the FFM. Those who are responsible for the use of chemicals as weapons should be identified and brought to justice.



In the current international security environment, the increased threat caused by non-State actors, including terrorists, is ever becoming imminent. We must definitely prevent chemical weapons and toxic chemicals falling into the hands of terrorists. In this regard, we would like to reaffirm the importance of our efforts through the Sub-Working Group on non-State Actors and the Open-Ended Working Group on Terrorism.

At the meeting of the Sub-Working Group held on 15 June, Japan made a presentation on its lessons learnt from the Tokyo subway sarin gas attack in 1995. We firmly believe that we could share our lessons with other States Parties on the crucial importance of strengthening national implementation measures for addressing those new challenges including threats posed by terrorists.

In this connection, we would like to stress that it is indispensable and mandatory for all States Parties to establish and strengthen their national implementation system. Moreover, in order to make the legislation really work, various efforts such as capacity building of personnel for National Authorities are essential. Japan will continue to actively participate in the collective efforts with the OPCW and the international community in this field.

Let me touch upon financial issues. The Programme and Budget for 2017 was presented by the Director-General on 8 July. Japan strongly believes it is essential to maintain an efficient and effective budget within the limited resources with clear prioritisation among various programmes. It is important to constantly review the effectiveness of ongoing activities and to develop a future plan while evaluating its activities. Japan is ready to constructively participate in examination on the details of the budget.

It goes without saying that it is essential to maintain a healthy and sustainable financial basis of the OPCW. In this regard, we express our serious concern over the current financial situation of the OPCW by the non-payment of assessed annual contributions and reimbursements. We would also like to urge States Parties concerned to pay their outstanding balances as quickly as possible.

In addition, cash deficits such as the two consecutive years in 2015 and 2016 should be avoided. We took note of the report of the Fortieth Session of the ABAF, which “encouraged the Secretariat to consider all potential options suggested by the External Auditor to improve the OPCW’s financial position.” We would also like to call upon the Secretariat to consider all such possible measures including the effective and flexible utilisation of the Working Capital Fund and the special fund for a new ERP, as well as rationalisation of its work. We would also like to call upon the Secretariat to develop a detailed concept of a strategic capability investments trust fund (SCIF) and to keep States Parties informed of its updates.

Last but not least, let me touch upon the issue of abandoned chemical weapons (ACWs).

My delegation listened carefully to the statement by the Ambassador of China; I dare not comment on his remarks on ACWs. However, I would like to stress that we need to work closely together to facilitate the process of destruction of ACWs which is, all of us here are aware, an unprecedented challenging task for any country.

I assure you our position, that is, the destruction of ACWs is the most important commitment Japan has made under the Convention. Japan has been making utmost efforts to destroy

ACWs in China, by investing enormous resources, both financial and technical, in the ACW destruction projects.

Let me stress that 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 and that is a view we share.

From the viewpoint of promoting a good understanding by the Council of the ACW destruction projects and ensuring the transparency in these important projects, Japan continues to provide the Council with updates on the progress made in the ACW projects. My delegation will give a detailed briefing on the progress made under the relevant agenda at this session.

With regard to the destruction plan for the destruction of ACWs with the mobile destruction facilities annexed to the decision of the Sixty-Seventh Session of the Council (EC-67/DEC.6), approximately 87% of the ACWs declared to the OPCW by Japan as at 29 April 2012 have been destroyed to date. However, due to various reasons, we consider it difficult to complete destruction of all such declared ACWs within this year and the respective ACW offices of Japan and China have started discussion on a work plan beyond 2016. In this context, Japan reaffirms its sincere and firm commitment to exert the greatest possible effort on our part for the early and complete destruction of ACWs with the adequate cooperation of China.

Finally, Madam Chairperson, I would like to reassure you of our delegation's full support and cooperation to ensure the successful conduct of this session.

I thank you for your attention.

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