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JAPAN

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

Mr Chairperson,
Director-General,
Distinguished delegates,

Opening

Last year marked the 20th anniversary of the entry into force of the Chemical Weapons Convention and the establishment of the OPCW. In order to celebrate the memorable year, we held an event to commemorate the anniversary in Tokyo last year. This year, we are facing a critical juncture as we are holding the Fourth Review Conference.

Response to the challenge against the international norm of the non-use of chemical weapons

Despite the significant role of the Convention and the remarkable work by the OPCW, there remain challenges against the international norm of the non-use of chemical weapons. It is still fresh in our memory that chemical weapons were used in the Syrian Arab Republic as well as in the murder at the Kuala Lumpur International Airport, Malaysia, and the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland announced that a nerve agent was used in Salisbury. Japan expresses its grave concern over, and its strong condemnation against the use of chemical weapons. It is quite disturbing that the chemical terrorism is a real threat in the world we live in.

Use of the chemical weapons seriously undermines the credibility of the Convention, damages the international norm of the non-use of chemical weapons, and alienates the realisation of “A World Free of Chemical Weapons”. Japan is particularly concerned that we may fall into a situation where we cannot stop recurrence of chemical weapons if we are unable to identify those responsible for chemical weapons use and to take united action among international society including the United Nations Security Council. We have to keep in mind that it is relatively easy and less costly for states of concern or terrorists to produce chemical weapons.

In order to bring the fact into light including the identification of chemical weapons users, we align with the international community by maintaining and strengthening the existing mechanism such as the OPCW and the United Nations Security Council as well as through



the “International Partnership against Impunity for the Use of Chemical Weapons” initiated by France.

Furthermore, all the States Parties share the responsibility for the prevention of the re-emergence of chemical weapons as well as to promote their non-use and non-proliferation. Once again, we urge each State Party to steadily fulfil the Convention obligations, including national implementation measures.

In order to prevent the use and recurrence of chemical weapons, it is indispensable to have investigation and attribution with a fair international mechanism in an objective manner based on the facts. For this purpose, such investigative expertise should be maintained and reinforced. Japan fully supports the work of the Fact-Finding Mission (FFM) for its capability, credibility and impartiality.

Fourth Review Conference

Looking ahead the coming 20 years, this year is a perfect opportunity to discuss what the future of the OPCW shall be like. We look forward to having fruitful discussions on the challenges of the Convention and the OPCW in the Open-Ended Working Group for the Preparation of the Fourth Review Conference.

Aiming at realising “A World Free of Chemical Weapons”, Japan places great importance on discussing the four main items in the Review Conference, including but not limited to:

First, the further universalisation of the Convention to achieve the goal of the complete destruction of chemical weapons worldwide. In particular, Japan strongly urges North Korea, Israel and Egypt to accede to the Convention. We welcome the Technical Secretariat’s measures to universalise the Convention, and will insist to further promote its universalisation on every occasion.

Second, the reinforcement of the national implementation in all the States Parties including developing countries, particularly the thorough implementation of the verification regime such as declaration and inspection for the purpose of preventing the re-emergence of chemical weapons.

Third, the strengthening of the OPCW’s verification regime and its emergency response capabilities, such as the rational and effective implementation of the OPCW’s inspection, improvement of its analytical capabilities, as well as the OPCW’s response to changes in the global security environment and the ongoing progress in science and technology.

Finally, the maintenance of a priority-based organisational structure as well as a sound and sustainable financial situation.

Abandoned Chemical Weapons

Lastly, the abandoned chemical weapons (ACW) project is the most important commitment Japan has made for the Convention. We would like to address that this project is in steady and firm progress with the cooperation between Japan and China.

So far we have, in cooperation with China, collected approximately 62,000 of ACW and destroyed about 50,000 of them. This achievement is the result of the fruitful collaboration between Japan and China.

In so doing, Japan has made its utmost efforts by investing enormous human and financial resources of approximately 1.66 billion euros to facilitate the ACW destruction in China. Japan provided as much information as possible on occasions such as the Executive Council and the Conference of the States Parties sessions to ensure the transparency of the process and the status of this project.

Last year, Japan and China established the destruction plan beyond 2016 and welcomed the visit of the Executive Council representatives. In order to achieve the completion goal under this destruction plan, Japan continues to make its utmost efforts with the appropriate and sincere cooperation from China.

We will report the progress of the ACW project in detail under the relevant agenda item.

Closing

Once again, we very much look forward to deepen our discussions among States Parties in order to further strengthen the Convention for our mutual future goal of realising “A World Free of Chemical Weapons”.

Thank you.

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