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JAPAN

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR MASARU TSUJI
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF JAPAN TO THE OPCW
AT THE FIFTIETH MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Thank you, Mr Chairperson,

I would like to express our appreciation to the Fact-Finding Mission (FFM) for its continued efforts and commend them for their work on its three reports, which provide us with a detailed account of the work. We praise the professionalism and impartiality that the FFM has shown despite the very volatile security situation and the difficult challenges it has been faced with.

For the benefit of time, I will limit my statement to the three reports of the FFM on today's table.

Based upon its extensive research and analysis, the FFM came to the grave conclusion that several incidents that occurred in the Idlib Governorate of the Syrian Arab Republic likely involved the use of one or more toxic chemicals -probably containing the element chlorine as a weapon. With regard to the alleged incident on 21 August 2015 in Marea, the report also confirms, with the utmost confidence, that at least two people were exposed to sulfur mustard, and very likely that the effects of sulfur mustard resulted in the death of an infant.

Since the release of the first FFM report last year, the international community has addressed, with strong sense of crisis by adopting, for example, the OPCW Executive Council decision (EC-M-48/DEC.1, dated 4 February 2015). In spite of strong condemnation by the international community, it was affirmed that toxic chemicals have once again been used as a weapon in the Syrian Arab Republic.

Japan reiterates its serious concern and stresses the importance of bringing all the facts to light, including information regarding the origin and how those toxic chemicals have been obtained by perpetrators.

Japan highly commends the work of the Mission for its dedication. We strongly support the activities of the JIM and the FFM's cooperation with the JIM. We urge all directly related parties, including the Syrian Arab Republic, to strengthen cooperation with the Technical Secretariat for facilitating the work of the Mission.



In face of the repeated use of these chemical weapons, Japan welcomes and is ready to support the draft decision, named “Further Reports of the OPCW Fact-Finding Mission in Syria” (EC-M-50/DEC/CRP.1, dated 20 November 2015) to once again show the commitment of the Executive Council to discharge its responsibility.

Lastly, Mr Chairperson, I request this statement be considered as an official document of this session of the Executive Council.

Thank you.

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