

STATEMENT BY H.E. MR. TOSHIO SANO
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THE DELEGATION OF JAPAN TO THE CONFERENCE ON
DISARMAMENT

AT THE EIGHTH REVIEW CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES
TO THE CONVENTION ON THE PROHIBITION OF THE
DEVELOPMENT, PRODUCTION
AND STOCKPILING OF BACTERIOLOGICAL (BIOLOGICAL) AND
TOXIN WEAPONS AND ON THEIR DESTRUCTION (BWC)

GENERAL STATEMENT, GENEVA, 7 NOVEMBER 2016

Mr. President,

At the outset, let me congratulate you, Ambassador György Molnár, on your assumption of the presidency to the Eighth Review Conference of the BWC. I would like to commend your active engagement to prepare for this Review Conference and assure you of my delegation's full support and cooperation in the coming three weeks. Japan aligns itself with the statement delivered by the distinguished Ambassador of Canada on behalf of the JACKSN. Japan welcomes recent accession of Cote d'Ivoire, Angola, Liberia and Nepal.

Mr. President, now I would like to highlight the following points from national perspective.

First, we believe it is time to improve the intersessional process (ISP) to make the BWC more responsive to a fast changing world. As the threat of biological weapons is deeply connected to the rapid development of science and technology, it is important for the intersessional process to be more flexible and effective. In this context, Japan and

Australia submitted a working paper 37 entitled “New ideas for the intersessional programme”, in which we proposed to give more decision-making mandates to the Meeting of States Parties (MSP). By giving further mandates to the MSP, States Parties can make necessary consensus-based decisions in a timely manner.

Second, we believe it is necessary to make the scientific and technological development review framework more efficient and effective in order for the Convention to respond to up-to-date biological threats. An open-ended working group, which Japan and Australia proposed to establish in our working paper, can be a suitable forum to review the scientific and technological development related to the BWC.

Although the rapid advancement in the field of life science has benefited mankind, it can also increase the biological threats caused by their misuse or illicit use. It is important for all scientists to recognize the risks of their research. Therefore, Japan supports the idea of encouraging biosecurity education and awareness-raising in developing a code of conduct for relevant professionals.

Third, Japan would like to emphasize once again the importance of strengthening national implementation of the Convention. In order to reflect the recent development of life science and maintain its effectiveness, relevant domestic regulations and legislations, biosafety and biosecurity measures, and an export control system need to be regularly reviewed. Enhancing transparency of BWC implementation and increasing mutual confidence among relevant actors are also important to reinforce the BWC. Japan resubmitted a working paper 36 entitled “Step-by-step approach in CBM participation” along with Australia, Canada, Malaysia, Republic of Korea, and Switzerland. We believe

this approach may help reduce some burdens which States Parties have actually faced and promote an incentive for them to participate in CBMs. Japan expects an action to take place along with an ongoing discussion about further CBM participation and voluntary measures for strengthening confidence among States Parties on BWC.

Fourth, we believe it will be meaningful to strengthen our collaboration with international organizations. In this context, Japan submitted a working paper 29 entitled “Strengthening Cooperation with International Organizations.” The BWC can be more effective if the cooperation among States Parties and relevant international organizations, including WHO, OIE and FAO is strengthened. We recommend creating a mechanism to facilitate close communication between the BWC States Parties and relevant international organizations and strengthening the mandate and capacity of the ISU. With its enhanced capacity, we expect the ISU to facilitate coordination among States Parties and relevant international organizations so that we can effectively counter public, animal, or plant health emergencies relevant to the Convention.

Fifth, we must be cautious about threats by non-state actors. In this regard, we believe that it is important to have domestic legislation, regulations on the transfer of BWC relevant materials, and national biosecurity measures.

Lastly, Mr. President,

As we stated before, Japan hosted Global Partnership meetings in Tokyo this past September which placed importance on preventing biological threats. As biosecurity is closely related to public health, intensive cross-sectorial discussion over health and

security is significant to enhance capability to counter biological threats. We would like to note that the 'Global Partnership' submitted to BWC an international cooperation paper which is relevant to Article X of the Convention. Such support is critical to achieving our shared objectives under the Convention.

Mr. President,

We all share a goal to further reinforce the Convention. Japan believes that we manage to reinforce the BWC effectively through practical and pragmatic approaches by building on common understanding and effective action.

I thank you, Mr. President.