



DELEGATION OF JAPAN
TO THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

STATEMENT BY JAPAN
AT THE FIRST COMMITTEE
OF THE 78th SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- THEMATIC DEBATE: OTHER WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION -
OCTOBER 2023, NEW YORK

Mr. Chair,

Japan remains fully committed to multilateral efforts related to arms control, disarmament, and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, which is crucial to peace and security of all regions around the world. Japan stresses the importance of reinforcing and universalizing the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), and other relevant regimes, as they remain the pillars of our fight against the use of Weapons of Mass Destruction.

Japan welcomes the declaration by the CWC State Parties and the confirmation by the OPCW on the destruction of all chemical weapons stockpiles, with the last completion by the United States this July. That being said, the repeated use of chemical weapons in recent years remain a serious concern, especially the alleged use by the Syrian Arab Republic Airforce in 2017. Japan supports the third report of the Investigation and Identification Team (IIT), which concluded that there are reasonable grounds to believe the Syrian Arab Republic Air Force perpetrated these attacks and continues to urge the Syrian Arab Republic to ensure accountability by addressing all outstanding issues. We further call on the international community to continue to unite in condemning any use of chemical weapons and in preventing their future use.

Mr. Chair,

Japan commits itself to the destruction of its abandoned chemical weapons (ACW) in line with its obligations under the CWC, and has invested significant financial resources amounting to approximately 3.2 billion Euros to cover all related costs associated with the national operation. Japan has been making consistent progress in this regard, with the successful destruction of approximately 78,000 ACW items out of the recovered 105,000. Despite the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, the project continues with constructive bilateral cooperation and coordination with China.

Mr. Chair,

Japan believes a further institutionalization of the BWC framework is vital to address bio-safety and bio-security issues, of which global awareness has increased to another dimension due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Japan therefore welcomes the successful conclusion of the 9th Review Conference of the BWC thanks to the able presidency of Ambassador Bencini of Italy in December last year, that established the Working Group to make recommendations to strengthen and institutionalize the Convention in all its aspects. Japan supports the collective efforts undertaken by the Working Group to establish two mechanisms; one for the full implementation of international cooperation and assistance under article X, and the other for reviewing scientific and technological developments.

The second session of the Working Group took place this August under the able chairpersonship of Ambassador Damico of Brazil, covering these two mechanisms among others. As a Friend of Chair for the topic on organizational, institutional and financial arrangements, Japan is determined to continue contributing to its work.

Japan is also contributing to the promotion of international cooperation in the fields of biosecurity and chemical security as this year's chair of the G7 Global Partnership against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction.

Furthermore, Japan attaches great value to preserving and strengthening the United Nations Secretary-General's Mechanism for investigating the alleged use of biological and chemical weapons (UNSGM), as the only available tool to independently investigate any cases of biological

weapon attacks.

Japan also underlines the importance of implementing UN Security Council Resolution 1540 as a basis for tackling the threat of WMD proliferation to non-State actors. Japan contributed approximately 1 million US dollars to the UNODA to promote its implementation, and a part of the contribution was utilized for the appointment of Ms. Amanda Cowl as the first Regional Coordinator to promote implementation in the Asia-Pacific region. Japan will continue to support the implementation of the Resolution.

Thank you, Mr. Chair, for your kind attention.

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