

Statement by H.E. Ambassador Toshio Sano
Head of the Delegation of Japan
to the Conference on Disarmament

at the Meeting 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, 9 December 2013

Madame Chair,

At the outset, I would like to congratulate you on your assumption of the Chair to the 2013 meeting of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BWC). I am confident that this meeting will be successful under your able guidance and assure you of my delegation's full support.

The Meeting of Experts in August was meaningful and interactive with a lot of input from various experts. Based on previous discussions, Japan hopes that this Meeting of States Parties enables us to converge our views on several important issues and build a common understanding towards the next review conference in 2016.

We fully associate with the JACKSNNZ statement delivered by Canada. Nevertheless, I would like to highlight some points that are of interest to Japan.

First, we firmly recognise the necessity to review scientific and technological development in life science and to take appropriate measures against biological threats. Although we enjoy enormous benefits that science and technology has provided for us, their rapid advancement increases potential biological threats caused by their misuse or illicit use. In this regard, States Parties should fully implement the Convention by reinforcing legislative and

administrative measures, especially, to enhance biosafety and biosecurity levels. At the same time, voluntary measures are useful for that purpose. For example, in dual-use issues, scientists could play a crucial role in introducing educational programmes, and establishing a voluntary code of conduct. This year, “the Science Council of Japan” released a new version of the “Code of Conduct for Scientists” and shared its deliberation processes as well as their potential future tasks at the Meeting of Experts in August. I hope that States Parties which are interested in voluntary action by scientists will make reference to this code of conduct.

Second, Japan has continued to provide assistance for developing countries, and cooperated with international organizations, academia, and research institutions to assist the implementation of the BWC in developing countries. For instance, Japan has placed importance on capacity building in Asian and African countries and provided grant and technical assistance, including inviting a number of trainees to Japan. Furthermore, we provided 1.6 million USD in 2013 for the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) for infectious diseases mainly in the Asia-Pacific region. For this meeting, Japan submitted a working paper which compiles our cooperative activities related to the BWC.

Third, in the last Meeting of Experts, a constructive discussion about BWC compliance started under the agenda item of “national implementation”. It is required for States Parties to consider possible measures to enhance, and demonstrate, assurances of BWC compliance. We would like to underscore the importance of further discussions on this topic.

Lastly, Madame Chair, Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) has greatly contributed to promoting transparency and increasing mutual trust among States Parties. It could also play an important role to review the current status of national

implementation of each Member State. In August, Japan introduced a “step by step approach in CBM participation”. The details are contained in a working paper, which was submitted by Japan with Australia, Canada, Malaysia, New Zealand, Republic of Korea and Switzerland as co-sponsors. The purpose of this working paper is to stimulate a constructive discussion since this meeting is the last one in the current inter-sessional process to deal with this agenda as a biennial item.

I thank you, Madame Chair.