

AT THE MEETING OF 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, 14 DECEMBER 2015

Mr. Chairman,

It is my pleasure to congratulate you on your assumption of the Chair of this important meeting. I am confident that you will guide us to a successful conclusion, and I assure you of my Delegation's full support and cooperation.

The Meeting of Experts in August was meaningful and interactive with a lot of input from various experts. Based on the discussion we have had during the intersessional process, Japan hopes that this Meeting of States Parties (MSP) clarifies practical measures that could be agreed upon at the Eighth Review Conference next year. In this regard, Japan highly appreciates the Chair's initiative to provide a non-paper on the possible elements for the substantive part of the report of this MSP in advance.

We need to make maximum use of this MSP and preparatory process for review conference and advance discussion constructively by looking upon the outcome of the Eighth Review Conference and further direction of the BWC. Japan fully associates with the JACKSNNZ statement delivered by the distinguished delegate from Canada. In addition to that, I would like to draw your attention to several points of particular interest for Japan.

First, we think it is necessary to make scientific and technological development review more structured in order for the BWC to respond to modern biological threats. Although rapid advancement in the field of life science has benefited mankind, it also increases the potential biological threats caused by their misuse or illicit use. In this regard, States Parties, along with an involvement of industries and academic societies, should continuously follow scientific and technological development in life science and make an effort to keep BWC implementation relevant to changes in the real world. It is, therefore, important to advance discussions at this MSP about a framework of review after the Eighth Review Conference. Japan, along with interested States Parties, would like to actively engage in a discussion to develop a systematic review structure for the forthcoming Review Conference.

Second, Japan has continued to provide cooperation and assistance related to the BWC bilaterally and with international organizations, academia, and research institutions. At this meeting, Japan submitted a working paper about this effort. We will introduce the details under the agenda item on international cooperation and assistance.

Third, we would like to reemphasize the importance of strengthening national implementation. In order to reflect the recent development of life science and maintain its effectiveness, relevant domestic legislation, biosafety and biosecurity measures, and export control need to be regularly reviewed. Enhancing transparency of BWC implementation and increasing mutual confidence are also important to reinforce the BWC. Japan expects action to take place along with an ongoing discussion about further CBM participation and voluntary measures for strengthening confidence between States Parties on BWC implementation.

Fourth, Japan welcomes that concrete proposals are actively made at the discussion under the biennial agenda item on strengthening implementation of Article VII. The international response to the Ebola outbreaks in West Africa has provided a great lesson to the discussion which enhances BWC implementation. We shared our response to the Ebola outbreak and lessons we learned at the Meeting of Experts in August. We value the consideration and development of detailed procedures and mechanisms for requesting assistance under Article VII, which contributes to enhancing the BWC, and we expect this will lead to concrete outcomes at the Eighth Review Conference.

Lastly Mr. Chairman,

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, rather than the legally binding approach.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman