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STATEMENT BY NOBUSHIGE TAKAMIZAWA
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TO THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

AT THE FIRST COMMITTEE OF THE 72ND SESSION
OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- THEMATIC DEBATE: OTHER WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION -
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Mr. Chairman,

Japan actively takes part in international initiatives for arms control, disarmament, and nonproliferation with regard to weapons of mass destruction, in the form of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons, as well as missiles as a means of delivery and associated technologies and materials. On this occasion, I would like to share Japan's perspectives on chemical and biological weapons respectively.

This year marks the 20th anniversary since the establishment of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). We emphasize the importance of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and the OPCW as its implementing body.

The use of chemical weapons cannot be allowed by anyone under *any*

circumstances for *any* reason. The use of chemical weapons in Syria, despite strong condemnation by the international community, poses a serious challenge to the global norms of prohibiting the use of chemical weapons.

In this regard, Japan fully supports the work of the OPCW-United Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism (JIM). It is of great importance to promote cooperation for identifying those who are responsible for the use of chemical weapons and bringing them to justice. We look forward to the report of JIM and are ready to work constructively in order to hold the perpetrators accountable.

Mr. Chairman,

It is essential to strengthen efforts to accelerate the implementation of national measures which serve as a fundamental tool for preventing the re-emergence and proliferation of chemical weapons. Moreover, the increased threat posed by non-State actors including terrorists, is becoming an imminent issue. We must prevent, without fail, chemical weapons and toxic chemicals from falling into the wrong hands.

Japan also believes it is important to redouble our efforts towards the universalization of the CWC. We have provided expertise and technical assistance to facilitate non-member States to join the Convention. We

encourage the remaining four non-member States to reconsider their position, or to facilitate their respective internal processes for early accession.

Mr. Chairman,

Japan takes its obligations under the CWC seriously, and has invested significant amount of human and financial resources for fulfilling its obligations, one of which is to destroy abandoned chemical weapons (ACWs) in China. It is true that the ACW project entails various challenges and uncertainties, but the project has been making consistent progress.

Significant progress has been already achieved and approximately 49,000 ACWs have been destroyed. Let me also stress that the progress of the ACW project has been made possible with the valuable on-site joint efforts by Japan and China, in which each country bears respective responsibilities. I would like to underline that, without such bilateral constructive cooperation and close coordination, this unprecedented, difficult project could not have been carried out. Japan reaffirms its commitment to continue its fullest possible efforts to advance this project.

Mr. Chairman,

Along with the CWC, the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) has

also played a vital role for international peace and security.

Japan remains aligned with States Parties and fully commits itself to strengthen the BWC.

In order to reinforce the Convention, we would like to focus on revitalization of the intercessional process based on the discussions during the 8th Review Conference held last November. In this regard, Japan continues to stress the importance of 1) awareness-raising, education and outreach among scientists, 2) collaboration with international organizations, and 3) confidence building measures.

At the same time, the universalization of the BWC has become increasingly important to enhance international security. In this sense, Japan welcomes the recent accession of Samoa and strongly encourages other states to join the Convention soon.

Japan, together with relevant international organizations, academia, and research institutes, is ready to provide cooperation and assistance related to the BWC for the State Parties in need. We believe that we manage to reinforce the BWC effectively through practical and pragmatic approaches, building on common understanding and effective action.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.