

GP Statement at the 8th Review Conference of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction

Mr. Chairman,

As Chair of the G7 Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction (GP) in 2016, Japan delivers the following statement on behalf of the 30 members of the GP (Australia, Belgium, Canada, Chile, the Czech Republic, Denmark, the European Union, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, the Republic of Korea, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, the United Kingdom and the United States).

Established in 2002, the GP is an initiative to prevent terrorists, or states that support them, from acquiring or developing weapons of mass destruction. In 2011, it identified biological security as a collective programming priority and, in 2012, established a Bio Security sub-Working Group (BSWG) consisting of all GP members. In addition to the GP members, representatives from international organizations such as World Health Organization (WHO), the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), and the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BWC) Implementation Support Unit (ISU) also participate in GP meetings contributing to discussions and deliberations that led to the agreement in 2012 on five BSWG Deliverables, notably with regard to the nonproliferation of biological weapons.

The Global Partnership places great importance on preventing biological threats, regardless of cause, through the funding of projects in bio-security in collaboration with its partner countries' and relevant international organizations and initiatives. Particularly as the threat of biological weapons persists, it is important for relevant sectors to regularly share up-to-date information and collaborate to enable effective international response to major public health emergencies.

GP members regard international cooperation and assistance as one of the most important activities to build and strengthen the global capacity to respond to

biological threats, and have worked together to provide and coordinate such assistance. The GP provides assistance to countries of relevance to Article X of the BWC, recognizing that such support is critical to achieving our shared objectives under the Convention. This work, together with many other activities that GP members carry out, is therefore a major contribution to Article X. A working paper on GP contributions of relevance to Article X will be submitted to the ISU.

Through international cooperation with many countries around the world, GP members also address other important aspects of the BWC, such as national implementation, including the promotion of education and awareness raising. They thereby support and reinforce the Convention's objectives with regard to prohibiting the development, production, acquisition, transfer, retention, stockpiling and use of biological and toxin weapons.

GP members believe the Partnership's cross-regional nature is an important element in its strength and encourage Parties to the Convention to work across the traditional boundaries of geography, politics and economic development to reach consensus in ways that can help strengthen the BWC. One approach is to identify the areas in which many states have a common interest in making progress and then working together to help all countries find the ways and means to reach that common goal. By leveraging GP members' collective commitments, this unified approach can help achieve a positive outcome at the Eighth BWC Review Conference.