

**JAPAN****JAPAN'S EFFORTS AND PROGRESS ON THE DESTRUCTION
OF ABANDONED CHEMICAL WEAPONS****I Introduction**

1. According to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction (hereinafter “the Convention”), Japan, as the Abandoning State Party (ASP), is required to destroy declared abandoned chemical weapons (ACW) in China and as the Territorial State Party (TSP), China provides appropriate cooperation.

2. Japan has been carrying out the destruction of ACW to fulfil this obligation and has invested enormous financial and personnel resources to make all possible efforts. Japan is currently moving forward the project in accordance with “Destruction Plan for the Chemical Weapons Abandoned by Japan in the People’s Republic of China Beyond the Year 2016” (annex of EC-84/NAT.6), which was jointly submitted to the Executive Council (hereinafter “the Council”) last year.

3. Through the joint efforts by Japan and China, progress of the ACW project has been made since the last Review Conference. This paper summarises the outline and progress of the project to help other States Parties have better understanding.

II Challenges of the ACW Project

4. The ACW project entails various challenges. Excavation and recovery operations are conducted in various locations, including mountainous areas, riverbeds and urban districts. Most ACW items are highly corroded or deformed as a result of remaining underground or underwater for a long time. Therefore, maximum caution and technical expertise are required from excavation to destruction. In addition, due to harsh weather conditions, all kinds of ground operations in the northern part of China cannot be carried out during wintertime.

5. While providing all financial resources, Japan relies on the cooperation of China for various tasks such as site selection, design, and construction of the destruction sites, transportation of ACW, various domestic coordination and administrative procedures, procurement of explosives, and security of ACW storehouses and destruction facilities. In addition, since the project is carried out in Chinese soil, the project must be implemented in compliance with Chinese laws and regulations. Throughout the process of the project, decisions are made based on the bilateral agreement to fulfil Chinese regulations and requirements. This coordination process can be lengthy and requires enormous efforts.



6. As the number and location of ACW in China are unknown, it is inevitable that we sometimes modify the implementation plan with the sudden discovery of ACW. Japan has provided China with all available information, including burial locations, material used for chemical weapons production, the deployment of the Japanese troops, the location of their arsenals and depots at the end of the World War II, and records of testimonies by former Japanese military personnel.

7. The destruction project of ACW is complicated because of the aforementioned challenges. Therefore, its stipulation is distinguished from that of stockpile weapons. The Part IV (B) of Verification Annex contains exceptional provisions regarding destruction of ACW under the mandate of the Council. It defines the specific requirements for declaring and destroying ACW, includes how the OPCW inspections are to be carried out, and gives TSP the right to consult with ASP to decide on the destruction plan.

8. The Part IV (B) also mandates the Council to review and make an important decision on the destruction of ACW to ensure its appropriate implementation. The Sixty-Seventh Session of the Council approved the Destruction Plan after 29 April 2012. The Director-General has been providing reports on the overall progress of the destruction of ACW at each regular session of the Council in accordance with the decision by the Council (EC-67/DEC.6). Japan has also been submitting reports and delivering briefings on the progress of the project at each regular session of the Council in accordance with the same decision.

9. In March 2017, Japan and China submitted to the Eighty-Fourth Session of the Council the “Destruction Plan for the Chemical Weapons Abandoned by Japan in the People’s Republic of China Beyond the Year 2016”. In accordance with this plan, Japan intends to make its fullest possible efforts in cooperation with China with a view to completing the destruction of ACW buried or stored in Haerbaling, as well as those of ACW recovered and stored in other locations that had already been declared to the OPCW as at 31 December 2016, preferably within the year 2022.

III The Progress of the ACW Projects

10. In the past five years, the project achieved progress by joint efforts of Japan and China, as reported to the Council. The unprecedented and extremely challenging projects cannot be carried out without close coordination and cooperation between Japan and China.

11. In the past five years, the Mobile Destruction Facility (MDF) installed in Shijiazhuang in October 2012 completed its destruction operation in January 2016. In total, 2,567 ACW were destroyed in Shijiazhuang. The MDF installed in Wuhan in January 2014 completed its destruction operation in May 2015, having destroyed 264 ACWs. Meanwhile, preparations for destruction operations using MDFs in Harbin, Guangzhou and Taiyuan have progressed on the basis of the current destruction plan. The MDF in Harbin, which has recently been installed in the destruction site, is scheduled to start its operation in April 2019.

12. In Haerbaling, as a result of the excavation and recovery operation that started in November 2012, about 16,000 ACW have been recovered as of November 2018. Meanwhile, the destruction operation in Haerbaling, which started in December 2014, has successfully destroyed about 14,000 ACW as of November 2018. To accelerate further the

ACW destruction operation in Haerbaling, a new destruction facility will be installed in addition to the existing facilities.

13. On-site investigations as well as excavation and recovery operations in various areas have been carried out with the cooperation of China. As of November 2018, more than 130 such operations resulted in the recovery and the declaration of 48,373 ACWs as of July 2018 (not including the number of ACWs recovered in Haerbaling and declared to the OPCW by the same date). Such investigations, excavations and recovery operations are still ongoing.

14. The latest declaration by Japan was submitted to the Secretariat on 25 July 2018. Accordingly, the total number of declared ACWs reached 63,722, while the total number of destroyed ACW reached 50,532.

IV Measures for Smooth Implementation of the ACW Projects and Efforts for Ensuring Transparency

15. As mentioned above, close coordination and cooperation between Japan and China are indispensable to move the projects forward. A number of bilateral consultations between Japan and China at various levels have been contributing to maintaining and enhancing partnership for the project. The Japan-China Joint Working Group Meetings are held annually by the representatives of both countries to review the result of past activities, to draw best practices and lessons, and to discuss the prospects of future activities. Frequent consultations by authorities and players of both sides involved in the project are also held.

16. In addition to the bilateral consultations, Japan, China and the Technical Secretariat hold biannual trilateral meetings. These meetings provide the venue to share the information on the status and outlook of the project so that transparency of the project and appropriate verifications are ensured. The Council delegation including the Chairperson of the Council and the Director-General has visited the facilities in Haerbaling three times since 2013. The delegation has recognised the professionalism and dedication of personnel at work from both sides, and close bilateral cooperation at all levels.

V Conclusion

17. Due to the inherent uniqueness of the ACW project, there are many difficulties in its implementation. However, Japan is committed to make its fullest possible efforts toward the destruction of ACW and further cooperation with China as well as OPCW. Japan hopes that bilateral cooperation exemplified in this project stimulates further cooperation among States Parties for the realisation of “a world free of chemical weapons”.

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