



**Statement delivered by H.E. Mr Ichiro OGASAWARA  
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Head of the  
Delegation of Japan to the Conference on Disarmament  
Ninth Review Conference 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)  
Agenda item 10a - General debate  
28 November 2022**

Mr. President,

At the outset, let me congratulate you, Ambassador Leonardo Bencini, on your assumption of the presidency of the Ninth Review Conference of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BWC). I appreciate your leadership and assure you of my delegation's full support and cooperation.

The outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic illustrated eloquently the need to strengthen the BWC regime in order to address biological risks. Japan believes it paramount to take the following five concrete actions at this Conference.

First, we believe now is the time to break the 20-years stagnation and make this Convention more operational to adequately address evolving challenges we are facing. To this end, it is crucial for the intersessional process to be more flexible and effective, and Japan aligns itself with the proposal submitted by Canada and the Netherlands to establish a temporary experts working group (EWG) and to give certain decision-making mandates to the Meeting of States Parties (MSPs) so that State Parties can make decisions in a timely manner. Japan hopes this proposal should be reflected in the outcome document of the Conference.

Second, Japan has the honour to chair the 2020 Meeting of Experts related to the review of relevant science and technology (MX2). Although rapid advancements in the field of life science have benefited mankind, their potential misuse or illicit use may increase biological threats. We welcome the substantial discussions among States Parties at the MX2 and many proposals on the table to address these threats. The concrete outcomes of this Review Conference should be built upon discussions at the MXs and the MSP since the eighth Review Conference.

Third, the enhancement of national implementation is one of the key issues to be addressed at this Conference. In March this year, Japan sponsored three workshops organized by the ISU and UNODA in Geneva on strengthening BWC-related capacity in ASEAN countries. These workshops form the concluding part of a series of projects that Japan had the pleasure to finance. In the current intersessional period, Japan has also submitted a series of working papers along with other States Parties to promote so-called “Step-by-step approach in CBM participation”. Japan sincerely hopes that these intersessional works will lead to tangible progress at this Conference.

Fourth, cooperation and information exchange with relevant international organizations such as WHO and OIE are of great value to improve the effectiveness of the BWC regime and its implementation. This Conference should develop a greater synergy among these organizations.

Fifth, Japan also stresses the importance of further universalizing the Convention. We welcome this year’s accession of Namibia and strongly encourage other non-member states to follow. At this Conference, a unanimous call by the State Parties should be issued for further universalization.

Mr. President,

Next year, Japan will host the Global Partnership Working Groups in Tokyo as the Presidency of the G7. We will facilitate numerous discussions, including those on biosecurity, with the participation of approximately 30 countries and international organizations. Activities undertaken in the framework of the Global Partnership continue to contribute greatly to strengthening the BWC.

Mr. President,

Japan appreciates the sincere and constructive manner in which Ukraine and the United States took part in the BWC Article V Formal Consultative Meeting this September. Japan is of the view that this consultation was duly conducted and concluded, and required no follow-up actions, including at the present Conference. Japan also appreciates that the Security Council did not decide to initiate any investigation upon unfounded complaint lodged by the Russian Federation in October in line with the article VI of the Convention. The article V consultation mechanism as well as article VI procedure should not be abused for propagating disinformation and false arguments against other Member States, which risks undermining the credibility of the Convention.

To conclude, let me announce, Japan, together with Lao People's Democratic Republic and the Philippines, will organize, and welcome all of you to, a side event titled “Efforts to Strengthen the implementation of the Biological Weapons Convention in Southeast Asia”, at 9am on the 8<sup>th</sup> of December, in the Room XXIII (23).

I thank you, Mr. President, for your kind attention.

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