

Statement by Ms. ERI Arfiya,
Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan
at the Fifth Review Conference
of the Convention on the Prohibition of Anti-Personnel Mines,
Siem Reap, Cambodia, 25 November 2024

His Excellency Dr. Ly Thuch, Senior Minister and First Vice President of
Cambodian Mine Action and Victim Assistance Authority,
Distinguished Delegates,

I am ERI Arfiya, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan. On the occasion of the Fifth Review Conference of the Ottawa Convention, I would like to express my sincere gratitude for the warm hospitality of the Cambodian government and people, in particular, His Excellency Ly Tuch, the President of the Conference. I would also like to commend the efforts of all those involved in organizing this Conference.

Over a quarter of a century since the Ottawa Convention entered into force in 1999, the efforts of States Parties, civil society and all other stakeholders have achieved remarkable results in the implementation of the Convention, including in the clearance of anti-personnel mines, and humanitarian mine action. I would like to celebrate these achievements with you all.

Mr. President,

The fact that this Conference is being held in Cambodia is of particular significance. Along with the development of the Ottawa Convention, Cambodia has been working tirelessly on humanitarian mine action in a wide range of fields, including mine clearance, utilization of land after mine clearance, mine risk education and victim assistance.

Both Japan and Cambodia have been parties to the Ottawa Convention since its inception, and Japan has consistently worked with Cambodia in its efforts in humanitarian mine action under the principle of “human security”. Japan has contributed to the Ottawa Convention by promoting Triangular Cooperation with Cambodia, including capacity building assistance to third countries and universalization efforts.

In order to renew our commitment to humanitarian mine action, Japan announced the “Comprehensive Package for Assistance for Humanitarian Mine Action” and the “Japan-Cambodia Landmine Initiative” in July this year.

Japan’s vision is to provide comprehensive assistance to address the various needs and stages of humanitarian mine action, including risk education and awareness-raising assistance, capacity building assistance, mine clearance assistance utilizing emerging technologies, and victim assistance.

This will be done in collaboration with various partners including Cambodia, while taking into account the perspectives of the “Women, Peace and Security” (WPS) Agenda. This vision is in line with the spirit of the Ottawa Convention, which centers the principle of humanity.

Sadly, we are seeing an increase in reports of the manufacturing and use of anti-personnel mines in the international community. There are still many people suffering from the consequences of these landmines, and the pain and suffering of these people and their families will continue long into the future. Given this situation, steadfast compliance with the Ottawa Convention and its implementation are becoming an increasingly urgent issue of great importance.

Similarly, I would like to emphasize that it is important that all states adhere to the Ottawa Convention. There are now 164 States Parties to the Ottawa Convention, and this number has not increased since the Fourth Review Conference. Japan intends to continue universalization efforts tenaciously with other States Parties. We call on all States Parties to renew their commitment to the Ottawa Convention, and call on States not Parties to join the Convention as soon as possible.

Mr. President,

Since the start of the drafting process, Japan has been actively contributing to the discussions on the “Siem Reap-Angkor Action Plan”, to be adopted at this Conference. Japan will contribute to Cambodia’s efforts for the adoption of the Action Plan and the “Siem Reap-Angkor Declaration on a Mine-Free World”.

Next year Japan will preside over the 22nd Meeting of States Parties. During our presidency, Japan will continue to make the utmost effort to further the progress of the Ottawa Convention under the new Action Plan, building on the success of this Review Conference.

I thank you for your kind attention.