

Ukraine Mine Action Conference
(Opening session)
Statement by Foreign Minister Motegi

1 Opening

His Excellency Mr. Oleksii Sobolev, Minister of Economy, Environment and Agriculture of Ukraine, all guests from Ukraine, Your Excellencies, distinguished delegates, representatives of international organizations, and esteemed guests,

It is my great honor to welcome you all to the Ukraine Mine Action Conference here in Japan.

Today is the day two for myself after the appointment as Minister for Foreign Affairs, following the inauguration of the Takaichi Cabinet yesterday.

I am deeply honored that this is the very first international conference, which I host as the Foreign Minister, and that this conference is to address the issue of mine action, one of the most vital issues in supporting Ukraine which is undergoing its under fight against aggression.

It is also my great pleasure to have an opportunity to discuss this important theme with all of you.

2 Significance of Mine Action

Firstly, I would like to express my sincerest condolences to all those who have lost their lives and extend my heartfelt sympathy for those who have been injured by landmines and unexploded ordnance in Ukraine. I would also like to extend my deepest respect to all those who confronts dangers posed by landmines and unexploded ordnance in hazardous environments.

People in Ukraine are facing not only missiles and drones every day and night. It is estimated that nearly a quarter of Ukraine's territory is under high risk of mine contamination. These mines continue to endanger civilian lives and hinder recovery and reconstruction for years to come, casting a dark shadow over the country's future.

This is why we gather here today. Mine action is a vital part of a comprehensive, long-term process that leads to recovery and reconstruction in Ukraine, with bringing back the safety of soil for the productive use and achieving the returning home of people without any concerns. Entire international community need to make our best effort.

Japan has been steadfastly supporting Ukraine's recovery and reconstruction through public-private partnerships. We take a lead networking with countries, discussions and efforts to enhance mine action, which is a starting point for recovery and

reconstruction. This is Japan's major mission and responsibility.

3 Japan's Contribution: The "Ukraine Mine Action Support Initiative"

Taking an opportunity of today's conference, the government of Japan developed a new support package, titled the "Ukraine Mine Action Support Initiative." Allow me to highlight three key points of this initiative.

First, sustainable mine action requires advancement both in human capacity building and technology.

Japan will continue to provide equipment such as mine detectors and demining machines, and to enhance the capabilities of Ukraine's Mine Action Training Center in Vinnytsia Oblast, including through infrastructure development and specialized training programs.

Secondly, mine action must be seamlessly integrated into Ukraine's broader recovery and reconstruction process—a concept reflected in the "Nexus" approach, one of the key themes of this conference.

From this perspective, Japan will play a role in support for Ukraine, promoting socio-economic revitalization including through land restoration and utilization after demining, facilitating the safe return

and livelihood of residents, and industrial development including agriculture.

At the same time, we will continue to assist in mine risk prevention and reduction, medical and welfare support, and the social reintegration of victims, recognizing that mine action is indispensable to Ukraine's recovery and reconstruction process.

Third, strengthening and diversifying international partnerships is essential to advancing mine action more effectively.

Japan has long built partnerships in mine action with Cambodia. Build upon this effort, we have promoted and expanded what we call "triangular cooperation" network, an international partnership with countries suffering from landmines.

Today, I am pleased to announce that, in collaboration with also Colombia, a long-standing partner of Japan. We will be launching a new triangular cooperation initiative to provide support to Ukraine. It is a great honor that Japan, Ukraine, and Colombia will soon sign a Memorandum of Cooperation on mine action

In addition, Japan has made a financial contribution to the NATO Comprehensive Assistance Package

(CAP) Trust Fund, supporting mine action projects in Ukraine.

Through these collective efforts, Japan will play a leading role to make international network for mine action in Ukraine, more diversified and multi-layered.

Under the initiative build on those supports, we have developed measures to promote mine action that is faster, safer, and more sustainable, ensuring that our efforts directly and seamlessly contribute to Ukraine's recovery and reconstruction.

We will continue to walk side by side with our Ukrainian friends and all partners gathered here today.

4 Conclusion

Everyone in Ukraine live free from the threat of landmines in the just and lasting peace. Japan will spare no effort in achieving this goal.

It is my sincere hope that today's conference will serve as a meaningful platform to widely convey to the international community the vital importance of mine action, recovery, and reconstruction in Ukraine.

Thank you.

(End)