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STATEMENT BY TOSHIO SANO
AMBASSADOR OF JAPAN
TO THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT
AT THE FIRST COMMITTEE OF THE 70TH SESSION
OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- THEMATIC DEBATE: OTHER WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION -
23 OCTOBER 2015, NEW YORK

Mr. Chairman,

The Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) has significantly contributed to peace and security through disarmament in an effectively verifiable manner.

Japan firmly believes that it is essential to strengthen the efforts for promoting national implementation since national implementation measures will serve as a fundamental tool for preventing the re-emergence and proliferation of chemical weapons, as well as for adequately controlling chemical products. The universality of the Convention is also important. Japan has provided expertise and technical assistance to facilitate States not party in joining the Convention. In this regard, Japan welcomes participation of Myanmar and Angola to the CWC.

We praise the continued efforts made by the major chemical weapon possessor states for the destruction of their stockpiles. With the verifiable destruction of more than three quarters of all declared stockpiles of chemical weapons, the destruction of chemical weapons still remains the core objective of the Convention pending its completion.

Mr. Chairman,

We welcome the fact that the destruction process outside the territory of Syria is almost completed, and hope that all chemical weapons production facilities will be physically destroyed in accordance with the Convention as early as possible. We praise the combined efforts of the international community for their valuable contribution,

both financially and in kind.

Japan strongly and categorically condemns the continued use of toxic chemicals as weapons by any party in Syria. We are convinced that it is of the highest importance to bring all the facts to light. We welcome the unanimous adoption of Security Council resolution 2235 to establish an OPCW-UN Joint Investigative Mechanism (JIM) to identify those involved in such use, and emphasises the need to hold those responsible accountable. We call on all parties in Syria to cooperate fully with the JIM.

Mr. Chairman,

Japan has taken seriously our obligations under the CWC, and is committed to the destruction of abandoned chemical weapons (ACWs) in China with enormous human and financial resources invested. Although ACW projects entail various challenges and uncertainties, the projects have been making steady progress. In Haerbaling, the largest burial site of ACWs in Jilin Province, the test destruction operations started in December last year. It was a significant step forward for all the ACW projects. We would like to emphasise that the unprecedented and extremely challenging projects can only be carried out through close coordination and cooperation between Japan and China. In this respect, Japan reaffirms its commitment to continue its fullest possible efforts to advance our projects with the cooperation of the Government of China.

Mr. Chairman,

Like the CWC, the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC) has also significantly contributed to promoting international peace and security through disarmament.

This year marks the fortieth anniversary of the entry into force of the BTWC. Over the past forty years, the BTWC has played a vital role for international peace and security.

At the same time, we have witnessed the tremendous advances in science and technology that has enormous benefits to mankind, but also their dual-use nature increases new biological threats caused by their misuse or illicit use, in particular by non-state actors. Therefore, the universalisation of the BTWC has become more

important than ever before to enhance international security. In this regard, Japan welcomes the recent ratification by Myanmar and the accession of Mauritania and Andorra. We strongly encourage other states not party to follow suit and join the Convention at their earliest opportunity.

As the 8th Review Conference of the BTWC is approaching next winter, we need to start extensive dialogue on ways to strengthen the BTWC. Japan will actively participate in such discussion with a particular focus on responses to the rapid advances in science and technology.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.