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**STATEMENT BY H.E. MR YASUMASA NAGAMINE, AMBASSADOR OF JAPAN
AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF JAPAN TO THE OPCW, AT THE
SEVENTEENTH SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES**

Mr Chairperson,
Director-General,
Distinguished delegates,

Allow me, first of all, to congratulate you, Ambassador Peter Goosen, on your election as Chairperson of this session of the Conference of the States Parties. I am sure that the Conference will be successfully conducted under your able leadership and experienced diplomatic skills. I assure you of my delegation's fullest support and cooperation.

Last 29 April marked the fifteenth anniversary of the entry into force of the Chemical Weapons Convention. Up until today, the number of States Parties increased to 188. Substantial progress has been made toward the destruction of chemical weapons, which is one of the core objectives of the Convention. While the Chemical Weapons Convention is an epoch-making treaty to entirely destroy a certain category of weapons of mass destruction, it is said to be the most successful disarmament convention as well. I would like to stress it and appreciate the efforts that have been thus far made by the Technical Secretariat to implement the Convention.

On the destruction of chemical weapons, Japan welcomes that the decision at the Sixteenth Session of the Conference of the States Parties is being implemented and that efforts are being made by the possessor States to destroy the chemical weapon stockpiles. My delegation expects that the decision will continue to be implemented, which will be vitally important for the OPCW.

Under the current security context, however, it is once again acutely noted that promoting universality is indispensable to achieve the object and purpose of the Convention. My delegation expects that continued efforts will be made to that effect.

In order to continue adapting to a rapidly changing international peace and security environment, it is high time for us to consider the future of the Convention and the OPCW. The Third Review Conference to be held next year will be a perfect opportunity for doing so. Considering that the OPCW is in its transition period, Japan expects that the Third Review Conference will adopt a report which would indicate a future direction of the Organisation. In order to achieve this goal, it would be necessary that sufficient discussion would be made



during the meetings of the open-ended working group. We encourage the States Parties to engage themselves to and make the best use of it.

Against the backdrop of global efforts towards preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, including those against non-State actors, the OPCW is expected to perform more important roles than ever in this respect. Taking this opportunity, I would like to highlight the following challenges to which the OPCW ought to concentrate in the foreseeable future.

We are of the view that by thoroughly implementing the Convention, the OPCW would contribute most effectively to the promotion of international peace and security. To that effect, it is indispensable for all the States Parties to establish and strengthen their national implementation system in accordance with the Convention. According to the annual report on the status of implementation of Article VII of the Convention, only 47% of the States Parties have national legislation which covers all key areas. My delegation is concerned that, fifteen years after the entry into force of the Convention, still more than half of the States Parties have not had national legislation which covers all key areas. We believe that necessary measures must be taken to improve this situation.

The prevention of the re-emergence of chemical weapons will be ever more important in light of preventing terrorist attacks by non-State actors using chemical weapons. The verification regime of the Convention has played a significant role in this respect. In order for the Convention to function effectively, it is indispensable for all the States Parties to establish and strengthen their national implementation system in accordance with the Convention and make appropriate declarations. Moreover, it is important that the Technical Secretariat of the OPCW maintain and enhance its function and proficiency for performing all necessary verification measures.

For a better cooperation from the chemical industry and in order not to hamper the activities and development of the chemical industry, we should make our efforts to conduct the verification in the most efficient manner, without imposing too much burden to the industry. Moreover, in order to maintain and enhance the effectiveness of the Convention and the verification regime along with science and technology developments, it is also necessary to appropriately monitor such developments and adapt to them accordingly. For these purposes, it is vital to strengthen the relationship between the OPCW and the chemical industry.

The national and regional capacity-building for protection against the use of chemical weapons and for chemical safety and security can also be effective for the prevention of the re-emergence of chemical weapons. A lot of efforts have already been made voluntarily by the chemical industry in the area of chemical safety and security. Japan believes that it would be effective to share their knowledge and experience in this area.

International cooperation is also important. Through this cooperation, it would be possible to enhance national implementation, chemical safety and security. In this context, Japan has contributed to the Associate Programme by providing on-site training in the Japanese chemical industry to two trainees. We believe that, this year, we have successfully transmitted the experience of the chemical industry in the area of chemical safety, in particular. Also, Japan has been making efforts to share our experience by, for example, sending experts to the seminar on chemical safety and security management, which was held in Malaysia in May. Japan appreciates the Technical Secretariat for having organised various

programmes of international cooperation. We encourage all the States Parties to make the best use of these programmes.

In order to tackle all of these challenges, we should always keep in mind the current international economic situation. While appreciating the efforts already made by the Technical Secretariat, we believe that the Technical Secretariat should seek more efficient and effective management and strive for a more compact, flexible and efficient organisation. In this context, Japan welcomes the programme and budget for 2013, in which the Technical Secretariat has shown its efforts of cost savings. We expect that this budget will be approved in this session of the Conference and encourage the Technical Secretariat to continue its efforts for further cost savings and improvement in operation efficiency.

The abandoned chemical weapons project in China has been making significant progress. Japan is committed to make its fullest possible efforts to destroy ACWs in China, tackling various challenges and uncertainties. Until now, Japan has invested enormous financial and human resources for the destruction of the ACWs. On this ACW project, a decision was adopted at the Sixty-Seventh Session of the Executive Council, to which the destruction plan jointly reported by Japan and China was attached. Japan reaffirms its commitment to destroy the ACWs in China in a sincere manner in accordance with the provisions of the Convention, and also based on the decision of the Executive Council.

The ACW project entails various challenges. Most ACWs are heavily corroded or deformed since they have remained under the soil or water for a long time. Also, since most of the ACWs were found together with other kinds of munitions, we need to go through first the difficult task of identifying which munitions are the ACWs. The excavation, recovery and destruction sites are located in many different areas of China. Also, the ACWs are found under the soil, water or other different conditions. In some areas, it is difficult to carry out works on the ground during the winter time. We also attach the highest priority to the safety of the personnel and the protection of the environment. These are the most important prerequisites to carry out the unprecedented project, which sometimes includes dangerous tasks, in a steady and safe manner. Besides, Japan has to implement these projects in a manner consistent with Chinese laws and regulations. We are making continuous efforts to that effect.

In this ACW project, both Japan and China play respective roles. In order to develop further this difficult project, close coordination and cooperation between the two countries based on mutual trust are indispensable. Important achievements have been made in this ACW project, thanks to valuable cooperation between Japanese and Chinese experts at the site of excavation, recovery and destruction. While Japan remains committed to make steady progress in this project, we expect that China will also continue to provide appropriate cooperation, so that the two countries can continue to carry out this project jointly in the spirit of "one team, one goal."

On the destruction operation initiated in Nanjing in October 2010, despite a lot of technical challenges, which was caused partly because of the fact that the operation in Nanjing was the first destruction activity of the ACW project, we made steady progress and finally, in June 2012, this operation has been completed, having destroyed 35,681 munitions. Currently, Japan has been undertaking the disposal works of the contaminated waste in Nanjing. Some additional facilities have been installed for this purpose. Though these disposal works are not mandatory in accordance with the provisions of the Convention itself, we have decided to

deal with these disposal works based on bilateral consultation with China. After these disposal works in Nanjing, the decontamination of the Mobile Destruction Facility, the MDF, and the remaining preparation works in Wuhan have been completed, the MDF will be transported to Wuhan.

In northern China, another MDF was installed in Shijiazhuang in October 2012. With everything going smoothly, the destruction most likely starts next month. We believe that the installation of this additional MDF marked an important milestone of the ACW project.

In Haerbaling, the biggest ACW burial site, the facilities for excavation and recovery operations have become ready for initial operations. Currently, the final preparatory works are ongoing and, if everything goes smoothly, the excavation and recovery operations most likely start next month. Also, we are doing preparatory works in order to start the construction of the building to house the test destruction facility next spring.

In addition to the destruction operation and the preparatory works, Japan has been carrying out on-site investigations, excavation and recovery operations in various areas in China.

Despite all the challenges of the ACW destruction project, we have been making progress by overcoming these challenges through close coordination and cooperation between Japan and China.

In order to promote correct understanding and to enhance transparency, a photo and video exhibition on the ACW project is being held here in the World Forum. I would like to take this opportunity to invite all delegates to visit the exposition.

Japan has been working for the destruction of the ACWs in China in a sincere manner. But Japan alone cannot promote this whole project. We can never overemphasise that the 'appropriate cooperation' by China is indispensable for the future conduct of the ACW project. We are determined to continue making our fullest possible efforts to destroy all the ACWs in China in accordance with the provisions of the Convention, and also based on the decision of the Executive Council, ensuring the transparency of this project.

To conclude, I would like to assure you, Mr. Chairperson, once again of the fullest support of my delegation to a successful conduct of the Conference. I would also like to request that this statement be circulated as an official document of this session of the Conference.

Thank you, Mr Chairperson.

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