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**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR MASARU TSUJI
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NINETEENTH SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE STATES PARTIES**

Madam Chairperson,
Director-General,
Distinguished delegates,

I would like to congratulate you, Ambassador Korać, on your election as Chairperson of this session of the Conference of the States Parties. We are confident that, under your able leadership, this session of the Conference will make substantial progress. I would like to commend the Director-General for his comprehensive statement. I would like to thank him, as well as the Technical Secretariat, for their valuable contribution to the work of the OPCW.

In the current security environment, we are facing increasingly diversified challenges and new destabilising factors continue to emerge. In facing these new challenges, such as international terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, united efforts of the international community have become ever more important.

Among such efforts, the Chemical Weapons Convention is often said to be one of the most successful multilateral instruments in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The united efforts towards the destruction of the chemical weapons, the primary cause of this Convention, have been showing steady progress. The contribution of the OPCW received much appreciation as seen by the Nobel Peace Prize of 2013. The year 2015 marks the 100th year since chemical weapons were first used on a large scale in WWI. This anniversary will once again draw the attention of the international community and we are confident that this memorable year will help renew the determination of the international community to further strengthen the cooperation for the elimination of chemical weapons.

On the chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic, we all share the belief that it is essential to eliminate the Syrian chemical weapon materials and destroy them as soon as possible in order to ensure regional stability and to facilitate the elimination process of weapons of mass destruction in general. We welcome the progress that the destruction process outside the territory of the Syrian Arab Republic is now close to completion: declared chemical weapon materials have been removed from the territory of the Syrian Arab Republic and 98% of it has been destroyed. We praise the combined efforts of the international community for their valuable contribution, both financially and in kind, and we



would like to extend our appreciation to the Technical Secretariat and the OPCW-UN Joint Mission for their hard work.

While we see progress on elimination of the materials, there is a significant delay from the original schedule of the commencement of the actual destruction of the chemical weapons production facilities. We welcome the progress of preparatory work for the actual destruction and hope that all CWPFs will be physically destroyed in accordance with the Convention as early as possible.

Having said that, there are other important tasks that remain to be addressed and the OPCW should stay fully engaged in order to fulfil its responsibilities. First, the question of accuracy and completeness of the initial declaration by the Syrian Arab Republic needs to be fully addressed in order to clear any discrepancies or doubt and to ensure full implementation of the Convention. Second, to our great regret, while the international community was working towards the elimination of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic, chemical weapons, in this case chlorine, were used again as weapons in that country. The use of chemical weapons by anyone is strictly prohibited and, as we have repeatedly expressed in the Executive Council meetings, we strongly condemn this use of chemical materials as weapons. The Fact-Finding Mission sent by the Director-General on the alleged use of chlorine, therefore, needs to continue its work to provide the Executive Council with information necessary for further consideration.

Let me briefly touch upon our basic positions on some of other important tasks of the OPCW.

First on the Programme and Budget for 2015, we support the draft budget for 2015 and express our appreciation to the Technical Secretariat and all the States Parties for their constructive participation in the budget forming process. For the best use of the limited resources, it is important to try to define the priorities among the various programmes according to the core objectives of the Convention.

About other programmes, we fully support the view of many of the previous speakers about the importance of universality. Japan will continue to extend support and encouragement to all States not Party to join the Convention.

Another very important programme is to encourage and facilitate the national implementation by the States Parties in order to improve the effectiveness of the Convention. Enhancing national implementation measures will serve for preventing the re-emergence and proliferation of chemical weapons, and it will promote a sense of fairness among industries of States Parties. While we see some progress in national implementation measures, we would like to register our concern that, after 17 years of the Convention's entry into force, still 41% of the States Parties have yet to establish national legislations that satisfy all initial requirements of the Convention. We would like to call upon all the relevant States Parties for their additional efforts to fully implement national measures under the Convention. The Japanese Government is prepared to continue to extend assistance for their efforts.

On important programmes on International Cooperation, the Japanese Government appreciates States Parties and the Technical Secretariat for having organised various programmes of international cooperation and we encourage the States Parties to make best use of these programmes. We would like to stress that it is important to constantly review the effectiveness of the ongoing programmes based upon the needs and cost-effectiveness.

These programmes should be assessed also from the criteria on how these programmes could facilitate the national efforts of States Parties for enhancing their implementation measures.

Last but not least, I would like to provide you with an update on the progress of the destruction of ACWs.

The destruction of the ACWs in China is one of the most important commitments that Japan has made under the Convention. In accordance with the decision of the Sixty-Seventh Session of the Executive Council, Japan has made its utmost efforts, including investing enormous resources, to destroy the ACWs in China. This task poses a big challenge to both Japan and China. Although these ACW destruction projects entail various challenges and uncertainties, the projects have made notable progress over the last year. One of the recent destruction activities in Shijiazhuang, for example, the Mobile Destruction Facility destroyed additional 309 items in the period from September to November this year. The total number of destroyed items in Shijiazhuang accumulated to 1,692. In Wuhan, the preparatory work for the commencement of a destruction operation by the Mobile Destruction Facility is well under way and actual destruction will start by the end of this month. In Haerbaling, the largest burial site of ACWs, the construction of a new destruction facility was completed in October and test destruction operations started yesterday, 1 December. It marks a significant step forward for all the ACW projects.

I would like to reiterate that the progress of the projects has been made possible by close collaboration between Japan and China. I want to stress once again that, without the constructive cooperation and coordination between the two countries these unprecedented difficult projects could not have been carried out. Japan reaffirms its commitment to exert the greatest possible effort for the further progress of the projects with the adequate cooperation of China.

Lastly on ACWs, in order to ensure the transparency on these important projects, we will host a side event on the ACW project in the lobby next to the Assembly Hall after today's session. We would like to invite all of you for this side event and hope you will be able to attend.

Let me conclude my statement by reiterating that Japan is prepared to fully cooperate with all other States Parties and the Technical Secretariat to address the challenges we face in our efforts for eliminating chemical weapons.

I would like to request that this statement be incorporated as an official document of this session of the Conference of the States Parties.

Thank you for your attention.

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