

STATEMENT OF JAPAN
AT THE FIRST COMMITTEE
OF THE 75th SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- THEMATIC DEBATE: CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS -
OCTOBER 23, 2020, NEW YORK

At this time of the global pandemic, Japan would like to emphasize that conventional arms, applied in warfare and non-state actors' offence, remain a major source of human loss and suffering. Scarcity of financial and human resources are reportedly having adverse effect on arms control and disarmament of conventional weapons. Japan, therefore, encourages all Member States to stand united to work on the "Disarmament that Saves Lives" in the spirit of the Secretary General's Disarmament Agenda. Having taken various initiatives and provided significant support in this area, Japan remains committed to its continuous contribution to that end.

Small arms and light weapons, in particular, remain major players in armed violence and crimes. It is for this reason that Japan contributed USD two million to Saving Lives Entity, or SALENT, which was launched here in New York a year ago, to support fellow States in advancing their conventional arms control. We look forward to seeing the facility functioning as a vehicle for collaboration among States to address the long-standing issue of small arms and light weapons, preventing diversion and enhancing better control. It is with the same aspiration that Japan, together with Colombia and South Africa, has submitted to the committee the resolution on "The Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects," and expects Members States to extend their support to this important resolution. While the Seventh Biennial Meeting of States (BMS 7) on the Programme of Action (PoA) on Small Arms and Light Weapons has regrettably been postponed for a fully understandable reason, we look forward to advancing our discussion in the Meeting in 2021 instead, when the PoA celebrates its 20th anniversary.

This year marks the 10th anniversary of the entry into force of the Convention on Cluster Munitions. Yet, cluster munitions still cause serious consequences in many parts of the world, shedding light on the urgent need for further universalization and effective implementation of the Convention. As a major contributor in UXO clearance, Japan will

continue its support in the area, and looks forward to constructive discussions in the Second Review Conference in November.

Japan welcomes the adoption of the Oslo Declaration of a Mine-Free World and the Action Plan 2020-2024 at the Fourth Review Conference of the States Parties to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention in November last year, where Ms. OMI Asako, then-Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs, represented Japan and renewed its commitment to mine action in her statement. Despite the remarkable progress made in the 20-year history of the Convention, the cruelty of landmines and other explosive devices remain major cause of human suffering as well as hindrance to livelihood and development. In an effort to ensure human security, Japan has been continuously providing assistance to tackle various issues caused by anti-personnel mines around the globe. Since 1998, Japan has contributed more than 800 million US dollars to mine action in 51 countries and regions. Japan stands ready to continue its assistance in mine clearance and awareness-raising activities, in order to help the international community to achieve its goal of a world free of mines.

Another remarkable progress in the past year was the adoption of the 11 Guiding Principles on Emerging Technologies in the Area of Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems (LAWS) in August last year. Japan highly appreciates the adoption as well as further discussion in the meeting of the Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) in September. We consider the Chair's proposal on the three-aspect approach useful to further advance this joint effort in a rather intricate subject, and look forward to further advancement of international discourse and consolidation of potential solutions that uphold the International Humanitarian Law and other relevant international instruments. Japan will continue its active contribution to the exploration towards international rule-making effort within the CCW framework.

Japan highly appreciates that the Sixth Conference of States Parties (CSP6) of the Arms Trade Treaty in August was convened, despite all the difficulties, in an unprecedented written format, with some decisions agreed upon towards significant enhancement of treaty implementation. As a member of the Managing Committee and the Voluntary Trust Fund Selection Committee of the Treaty, Japan will surely continue to play an active role in promoting treaty implementation, universalization and transparency in arms trade.

Japan assures that it remains committed to its continued contribution to the multiple areas of conventional arms control and disarmament. Through “Disarmament that Saves Lives,” the international community need to address and overcome the current adverse effect on security, and Japan will spare no effort in working to that end together with other Member States.