



DELEGATION OF JAPAN
TO THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

STATEMENT BY JAPAN
AT THE THIRD WORKING GROUP ON THE STRENGTHENING OF
THE BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION
- COMPLIANCE AND VERIFICATION -
DECEMBER 2023 GENEVA

Mr. Chair,

Japan is willing to seize the newfound opportunity presented by the outcome of the 9th Review Conference, marking the first time in over two decades that the topic of "Compliance and Verification" is on the agenda.

Our basic position on this matter is the need to be comprehensive, aiming to explore all possible measures, including confidence-building measures, international cooperation and assistance, and advancements in science and technology. This inclusive approach ensures a thorough examination while discussing potential verification measures from various perspectives.

While acknowledging the historical work on the Verification Protocol until 2001, we recognize the seismic shifts in the landscape of biotechnology since then. The 'bioeconomy' is on the rise, not only in Japan, but globally. Moreover, the entities harnessing biotechnology are becoming more diverse due to the cost reduction in genome editing and genetic analysis, coupled with AI predicting DNA protein structures at an unprecedented pace. This evolution implies a shift in the development of biological weapons, now feasible for smaller groups and individuals, not just states and large corporations.

Considering these transformative changes, the relevance of discussions predating 2001 needs meticulous evaluation. This requires extensive deliberations, drawing on the expertise of relevant experts.

Our approach should emphasize the need for practical outcomes rather than theoretical exercises. Active engagement with industrial, health, and medical stakeholders across not only Japan but all State Parties is crucial. This ensures that resulting measures are not only politically and financially viable but also

technically feasible and acceptable to our citizens.

Undoubtedly, this is a challenging task, demanding a substantial investment of work and time. Nonetheless, the past three days have provided a solid foundation for discussions. Japan is committed to actively and constructively participating in this discourse, recognizing the complexity and significance of the undertaking ahead.

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