



General Statement by Ambassador Ogasawara at the Meeting of States Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention on 22nd November

Mr. Chair,

At the outset, I would like to congratulate you, Ambassador Mailu, on assuming the Chairpersonship of the Meeting of States Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention. I would like to assure you of the full support and cooperation of my delegation.

Mr. Chair,

The Covid-19 pandemic has affected many multilateral efforts, leading to the postponement of meetings and events, including those of the BWC. However, at the same time, Japan believes that the need to strengthen the BWC to address biological risks has been highlighted by the pandemic among States Parties more than ever. Evidence of this enhanced awareness can be seen in the constructive and active discussions at the last MX meetings held this year, after two years of interval. These meetings were attended by approximately 70 participants from 30 countries, as well as 500 online participants from 60 countries.

Japan, as one of the five MX Chairs, strongly hopes that the discussions at the MXs that have brought convergences of views in many important areas, as well as follow-up discussions, will be appropriately reflected in the report of the Meeting of States Parties to serve as a meaningful stepping-stone towards a concrete outcome at the 9th Review Conference on the Operation of the Convention.

Mr. Chair,

Now, I would like to touch upon some of Japan's priority issues that should enjoy follow-up considerations at the MSP towards the 9th Review Conference.

First, the recent Meeting of Experts has seen convergence of views on the necessity of a systematic and structured science and technology review process. Substantive, concrete proposals concerning several core

elements of the mechanism have been put forward, necessitating further discussions among States Parties.

“Development of a voluntary model code of conduct for biological scientists” has also witnessed substantive progress, not least with the proposition of the “Tianjin Biosecurity Guidelines for Codes of Conduct for Scientists” that were developed by integrating views expressed by various cross-regional stakeholders. Japan would like to highly evaluate their efforts to and active participation in discussion about this proposal.

Mr. Chair,

Japan welcomes the new record of 92 countries that have submitted CBM Reports. Japan continues to be committed to promoting Confidence-Building Measures as a key part of national implementation of the Convention. Japan has provided voluntary contributions that have facilitated international cooperation activities such as an online training course for BWC National Contact Points in Southeast Asia. Japan encourages the MSP to actively discuss how effective international cooperation under Article 10 could encourage further submission of CBMs.

Japan also believes the current pandemic has reaffirmed the importance of Article 7 related issues in the context of strengthening the BWC. These will be a priority in the pursuit of a substantive Review Conference outcome. Japan has conducted various workshops and seminars to help countries respond appropriately in the event of the use of biological weapons, and concrete proposals have been discussed in the relevant MXs. Japan looks forward to further discussions on this at the MSP.

Mr. Chair,

To achieve any outcomes under the Convention, it is indispensable that all assessed contributions are paid in full, without which we are not able to convene meetings as planned and collectively iron out the paths forward in a timely manner. The MSP should urge all the States Parties to pay their assessed contributions in full and without delay.

Mr. Chair,

Finally, I urge all States Parties to address all the issues during the Meeting in a constructive manner and thereby find reasonable solutions to them ahead of the upcoming Review Conference next year.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.