

STATEMENT BY NOBUSHIGE TAKAMIZAWA
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TO THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

AT THE MEETING OF STATES PARTIES
TO THE CONVENTION ON THE PROHIBITION OF THE DEVELOPMENT, PRODUCTION
AND STOCKPILING OF BACTERIOLOGICAL (BIOLOGICAL) AND TOXIN WEAPONS AND ON
THEIR DESTRUCTION (BWC)

- GENERAL STATEMENT -
DECEMBER 4, 2017, GENEVA

Mr. Chairman,

Distinguished Colleagues,

At the outset, I would like to congratulate you, Ambassador Gill on your assumption of the Chair to the 2017 MSP to the BWC. I am confident that you will guide the work of this meeting to a successful conclusion, and I assure you of my Delegation's full support and cooperation.

Japan also welcomes this year's accession of Samoa to the BWC and strongly encourages other non-member states to join the Convention soon.

Mr. Chairman,

Over the last two years, six countries have become States Parties to the BWC. This achievement tells us that the "42 years old" Convention still remains relevant for the international disarmament and non-proliferation machinery and Japan remains aligned with other States Parties to fully commit ourselves to strengthen the BWC.

Japan believes that we can reinforce the BWC by establishing a robust Intersessional Process (ISP). During the 8th Review Conference held last November, we, along with other States Parties, worked interactively and proposed various ideas to

strengthen the ISP. We regret that we were unable to reach consensus on a new ISP program.

Mr. Chairman,

Japan has submitted several working papers¹ to this MSP. One emphasizes the importance of strengthening cooperation between the BWC and international organizations in order to enhance preparedness for biological threats. Another working paper encourages States Parties to submit CBM forms in a step-by-step process as a practical way to achieve the end-goal of “full and timely” CBM participation. Our third working paper supports the idea of encouraging biosecurity education and awareness-raising in achieving implementation of the Convention. We stand ready to contribute to substantive discussions. However, given the allocated time for the MSP and the variety of topics to cover under the Convention, a more robust ISP is necessary in order to fully address all of these issues.

Therefore, Japan would like to reemphasize the special mandate given to this MSP and the necessity to reach consensus on a new intersessional process. Japan, along with other Global Partnership members, highlights the significance of adopting a strong substantive program of work which provides for focused, expert-level work on a balanced array of key topics, leading to factual reports and recommendations for consideration at annual MSPs. Among many important topics, we believe that Science

¹ Working Papers:

“*Strengthening Cooperation with International Organizations*” (BWC/MSP/2017/WP.15) submitted by Australia, Japan, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

“*Step-by-Step Approach to CBM Participation*” (BWC/MSP/2017/WP.14) by Australia, Canada, Germany, Japan, Malaysia, Republic of Korea, and Switzerland

“*Awareness-raising, education and outreach: recent developments*” (BWC/MSP/2017/WP.22) by Japan, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and Ukraine

“*Strengthening the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention through a reinforced intersessional work programme*” (BWC/MSP/2017/WP.3) submitted by members of the Global Partnership

“*International Activities of Global Partnership Member Countries related to Article X of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention*” (BWC/MSP/2017/WP.17) submitted by members of the Global Partnership

and Technology, National Implementation, International Cooperation, and Preparedness, Response and Assistance should be further elaborated in a timely manner. From this perspective, Japan welcomes and can support a working paper entitled “Elements of a possible intersessional process” submitted by Russia, the U.K., and the U.S. Through this MSP, we all should focus on the substance rather than the “naming” of this process.

Mr. Chairman,

Japan places particular emphasis on the following three topics:

First, the scientific and technological (S&T) development review framework should be more efficient and effective in order for the Convention to respond to up-to-date biological threats. Furthermore, encouraging biosecurity education and raising awareness among not only scientists but also policy makers and other government officials is essential.

Second, enhanced national implementation strengthens the Convention. Therefore, encouraging States Parties to submit CBM forms step-by-step and increasing the level of CBM participation will enhance transparency and build confidence among all States Parties.

Third, by strengthening cooperation with international organizations such as the WHO, OIE and FAO, we can encourage them to work closely with States Parties in order to create a mechanism to facilitate close communication. This cooperation will enable States Parties to better prevent the spread of biological agents and toxins and respond effectively to sudden outbreaks.

We would like to further elaborate on these topics at a later stage.

Lastly, we share the grave concern regarding the current financial situation in the BWC and strongly encourage those who have not paid their contributions to do so as soon as possible, even minimally, as this is as an important first step to take.

Japan firmly believes that through this MSP, we should not focus on the procedures or differences of approaches but finding substantive elements in order to strengthen the BWC and reach some form of consensus on a robust ISP leading to the 9th Review Conference. We are ready to work on this endeavor along with all States Parties.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.