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STATEMENT BY TOSHIO SANO
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TO THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT
AT THE FIRST COMMITTEE OF THE 69TH SESSION
OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- THEMATIC DEBATE: CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS -
22 OCTOBER 2014, NEW YORK

Mr. Chairman,

In December this year, the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) will enter into force, and what we have strived for for many years will become a reality thanks to the collective and unwavering efforts of States and civil society. This will be another step forward in the regulation of the global arms trade. Since we have a strong and robust Treaty, we must now exert our collective efforts again to ensure the effective implementation of the Treaty. To achieve this goal, Japan believes that the successful First Conference of States Parties is crucially important. In this regard, Japan welcomes the generous offer by Mexico to host the First Conference next year and is committed to engaging in the preparatory process and to playing a constructive role in the discussions.

Mr. Chairman,

Japan believes that the entry-into-force of the ATT provides a positive impetus to the Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons (PoA). Although the political commitments in the PoA regarding small arms transfer has now evolved to a legal commitment, the PoA remains an important tool to address their illicit trade, because the PoA, together with the International Tracing Instrument, covers a wider range of issues, including marking, tracing and stockpile management. They require our continued attention and it is crucial for the UN to remain fully engaged in these issues.

Japan welcomes the successful conclusion of the Fifth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action (BMS5), held in June this year. We commend the unwavering efforts of Ambassador Zahir Tanin of Afghanistan, who made it possible as the Chair. The Outcome Document of BMS5, which was adopted by consensus, contains a number of points Japan advocated for in its working paper as well as on the floor. To name a few, they include further efforts to enhance matching needs and resources for international assistance; the role of women in policymaking, planning and implementation processes related to the Programme of Action; and a follow-up on the implications of new technologies for marking, record-keeping and tracing at the meeting of governmental experts (MGE) to be held next year. We look forward to working closely with other States and civil society on those important issues.

In this connection, we call on all Member States to extend their support to the annual resolution on small arms and light weapons drafted by Colombia, South Africa and Japan so that it will be adopted again by consensus. This year's resolution is a technical update from last year and includes references to the successful conclusion of BMS5, the endorsement of its Outcome Document, and the holding of MGE next year.

Mr. Chairman,

Both anti-personnel landmines and cluster munitions are major causes of serious humanitarian harm, and they not only pose grave dangers and harm to civilians during and after conflicts, but can also leave a lasting socio-economic impact for many years or even decades. We are deeply concerned by the reports that anti-personnel landmines and cluster munitions have recently been used. This leads us to the belief that it is essential that these two conventions become universal. I would like to reiterate Japan's call to all those States that are not parties to these two conventions to accede to them at an earliest possible date and join our collective efforts to end the suffering caused by these weapons. We welcome the recent announcement by the U.S. government on changing its anti-personnel landmine policy, which, we understand, is aligned with the key requirements and humanitarian aims of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC).

Japan welcomes the success of the 3rd Review Conference of the Anti-personnel Mine Ban Convention in Maputo in June, as evidenced in the adoption of the outcome documents, in particular the Maputo +15 Declaration. Japan would like to stress that the

outcome documents of the 3rd Review Conference not only reflect the Convention's unique spirit of cooperation and the strong aspiration by the States Parties, but also identify challenges that remain for the future. In order to alleviate the suffering and minimize the casualties caused by anti-personnel mines, Japan will continue to work closely with impacted States and the international community through regional cooperation including South-South cooperation for which Japan has advocated for a long time. In this regard, Japan commends active roles played by Cambodia Mine Action Centre (CMAC).

Japan welcomes Croatia's decision to host the 1st Review Conference of the Cluster Munitions Convention (CCM) in Dobrovnik next year. Japan will assure Croatia its full support and cooperation for a successful Conference.

Since 1998, Japan, as a leading proponent of mine action programmes, has provided assistance of nearly 580 million US dollars for mine action to 50 countries and regions. These include clearance activities of landmines, cluster munitions and Unexploded Explosive Ordnance, risk education and victim assistance projects. One successful case is the mine action programme in Colombia, in which the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) closely worked with the government and the affected people there. Japan renews its commitment to continue its support for affected countries in need. We encourage other states in a position to do so to join in the global effort to eliminate the threat and socio-economic impact of landmines and explosive remnants of war.

Finally, Mr. Chairman,

Japan recognizes the growing interests in the international community regarding the issues of Lethal Autonomous Weapon Systems (LAWS), and commends the leadership of France in the previous session which deepened our understanding on this issue through a lively exchange of views. We support the continuation of a discussion in order to identify future tasks about basic elements related to those weapons. Japan looks forward to participating in the discussion with other interested States, research institutes and civil society.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.