

**Statement by H.E. Ms. OMI Asako,
Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan
At the Fifth International Pledging Conference for the
Implementation of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention
25 February 2020, Geneva, Switzerland**

His Excellency Mr. Osman Abufatima Adam Mohammed,
Distinguished participants,
Ladies and gentlemen,

At the outset, Japan would like to congratulate Ambassador Mohammed on your appointment to the Presidency of the 18th Meeting of States Parties to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, and extend our appreciation for your initiative in organizing this Pledging Conference.

Mr. President,

At the Fourth Review Conference of the Convention held in Oslo last November, which I had the privilege to attend, we renewed our commitments towards realization of a world free of anti-personnel mines, and adopted the Oslo Declaration and the Oslo Action Plan. I believe that the Review Conference created new momentum among States Parties to commit to further efforts in mine action. As rightly stated in the two outcome documents, effective mine action contributes to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and to honoring our commitment to leave no one behind.

Mr. President,

Since the Ottawa Convention became effective two decades ago, States Parties, together with various stakeholders, have made significant progress, especially in mine clearance and victim assistance. Nevertheless, we are facing new types of challenges such as increasing casualties caused by improvised explosive devices, or IEDs, and new reports of use of anti-personnel mines.

In this context, promoting universalization and reinforcement of the Ottawa Convention is more crucial than ever, and the role of the Implementation Support Unit is increasingly significant. It is, indeed, the reason why I have the pleasure today to announce that Japan will contribute 2.8 million Japanese yen, or 25,471 Swiss Francs, to the Implementation Support Unit in our Fiscal Year 2020 starting from April, subject to the completion of necessary domestic procedures.

Mr. President,

A large amount of work still lies ahead of us towards our 2025 goal. Universalization of the Convention remains one of the major challenges. Indeed, some States that produce and possess large numbers of anti-personnel mines are still not parties to the Convention. Japan will continue its efforts to promote the universalization of the Convention, especially in the Asia-Pacific region.

Another aspect of landmine problems that we cannot ignore is that, even after 2025, landmine victims will remain facing challenges socially and physically. Rehabilitation of landmine victims is crucial for national and regional social reconstruction. Comprehensive victim assistance has to continue after mine clearance as the basis for development.

In order to achieve the goal of the Convention, we must consider how we can increase the efficiency of demining, and Japan believes that our work should benefit from technological development. In this respect, I was very pleased that the side event that Japan co-organized with Tohoku University in the Review Conference in Oslo introduced an advanced model of mine detector and demining technology of Japan, attracting strong interests of the participants.

In an effort to promote human security, Japan has been providing comprehensive support to tackle anti-personnel mine issues around the world. Since 1998, we have contributed more than 800 million US dollars to mine action in 51 countries. Our support focuses not only on mine clearance, but also on diverse domains including risk education, construction of schools and revitalization of economic activities, in order to promote stability and development.

Mr. President,

The deadline for realization of a mine-free world by 2025 is approaching. Having renewed commitments at the Fourth Review Conference, States Parties must tackle the persistent challenges with a sense of urgency. In order to “end the suffering and casualties caused by anti-personnel mines”, as stated in the Oslo Declaration, Japan reaffirms its commitment to enhancing mine action in cooperation with other States Parties, international partners, civil society, academia, and the private sector.

Thank you.

END