

STATEMENT BY JAPAN
AT THE FIRST COMMITTEE OF THE 77th SESSION OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- THEMATIC DEBATE: OTHER WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION -

OCTOBER 2022, NEW YORK

Mr. Chair,

Japan remains fully committed to multilateral efforts related to arms control, disarmament, and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, as this is crucial to achieving regional and global peace and stability. Japan stresses the importance of reinforcing the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), and other relevant regimes, as the use of such weapons must not be permitted under any circumstances.

Our calendar leading up to next year's First Committee will be marked by two very significant conferences, namely the 9th BWC Review Conference this year and the 5th CWC Review Conference next year. Japan is looking forward to cooperating with other States Parties and contributing to tangible outcomes at both of these conferences.

Mr. Chair,

The repeated use of chemical weapons in recent years is a serious issue, and the international community must be united in condemning any use of chemical weapons. In this regard, Japan continues to urge the Syrian Arab Republic to ensure accountability by addressing all outstanding issues. Japan will also continue collaborating with other States Parties to the CWC to deal with the use of chemical weapons and prevent its further use.

Mr. Chair,

Japan commits itself to the destruction of its abandoned chemical weapons (ACW) in line with its obligation under the CWC, and has invested huge financial resources amounting to approximately 3.0 billion Euros to cover all related costs associated with this national operation. Japan has been making consistent progress in this regard, with the successful destruction of approximately 60,000 ACW items out of the 90,000 recovered. Despite the impact of the pandemic, the project continues with constructive bilateral cooperation and coordination with China.

Mr. Chair,

Indeed, the Covid-19 pandemic demonstrates the detrimental and global impact that would be caused by any potential biological weapons. States Parties to the BWC have been cooperatively and constructively

discussing possible measures to strengthen the Convention. As part of these efforts, Japan chaired the 2020 Meeting of Experts related to the review of relevant science and technology. We remain firmly committed to contributing to success at the 9th Review Conference and to strengthening the Convention and its implementation. From this point of view, Japan is co-sponsoring the proposal to establish a Temporary Experts Working Group submitted by Canada and the Netherlands, submitted to the 9th Review Conference, as this could finally break through 20-year stagnation of the BWC regime.

Japan has also undertaken a number of international cooperation initiatives based on the Article X of the BWC, including in partnership with the Implementation Support Unit (ISU). For instance, in March this year, Japan organized capacity-building workshops in Geneva, bringing together various Asian countries to enhance preparedness for and response to the use of biological weapons.

Japan appreciates the sincere and constructive manner in which Ukraine and the United States took part in the BWC Article V Formal Consultative Meeting this September. Japan is of the view that this consultation was duly conducted and required no follow-up actions. Japan is also deeply convinced that this consultation mechanism should not be abused for political purposes with flimsy or even fabricated allegations.

Further, Japan supports the concept of preserving and strengthening the United Nations Secretary-General's Mechanism for investigating the alleged use of biological and chemical weapons (UNSGM), as it is the only available tool to independently investigate any case of biological weapon attacks.

Japan also underlines the importance of implementing UN Security Council Resolution 1540 as a basis for tackling the threat of WMD proliferation to non-State actors. Japan contributed approximately 1 million US dollars to the UNODA to promote its implementation, and part of the contribution was utilized for the appointment of Ms. Amanda Cowl as the first Regional Coordinator to promote implementation in the Asia-Pacific region. Japan will continue to support the implementation of the Resolution beyond the next comprehensive review to be conducted in 2022.

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