



JAPAN

Statement

by

**H.E. Ambassador MINAMI Hiroshi,
Permanent Representative of Japan to the OPCW, and
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary,
Embassy of Japan in the Kingdom of the Netherlands**

**At the Twenty-Ninth Session
of the Conference of the States Parties of the OPCW**

The Hague, 25 November-29 November 2024

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Mr. Chairperson,
Director-General,
Distinguished delegates,

Japan would like to express its appreciation for the leadership of OPCW Director-General Ambassador Fernando Arias and the dedication of the Technical Secretariat in upholding the professional, impartial, and principled implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). Japan also would like to express our full support for H.E. Mr Almir Šahović of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Chairperson of the 29th Session of the Conference of State Parties in conducting this session.

Mr. Chairperson,

Japan reaffirms in the strongest possible terms that any use of chemical weapons anywhere, at any time, by anyone, and under any circumstances, is utterly unacceptable and contravenes international norms and standards. We continue to actively engage in the international effort to ensure accountability for the use of chemical weapons.

We remain deeply concerned about the Syrian Chemical Weapons dossier. Syria has repeatedly failed to meet its obligations under the CWC. Japan commends the professionalism and impartiality demonstrated by the teams of the Technical Secretariat, including the DAT, FFM, and IIT. Japan, once again, demands Syria to cooperate fully in resolving outstanding issues. We recall last year's CSP decision, namely "Addressing the Threat from Chemical Weapons Use and the Threat of Future Use". Japan renews our determination to continue to take action to address threats related to chemical weapons in Syria and elsewhere.

Mr. Chairperson,

According to the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine, over 4,200 cases of chemical weapons use have been reported, with more than 2,000 individuals requiring medical care as a result. Japan reiterates its request to Russia in order to clarify the situation, including the alleged use of Riot Control Agents (RCA) as a method of warfare, as reported by Russian sources themselves.

Japan firmly supports Ukraine's sovereignty and commends the assistance provided by the OPCW and States Parties in response to Ukraine's requests for aid and protection. Japan is pleased to announce more than 180,000 euros of voluntary contribution have been made to the Trust Fund for the Implementation of Article X this March. Japan hopes this contribution, as well as the training for Ukrainian experts provided through the Technical Secretariat's technical assistance visit (TAV) will ensure Ukraine to protect its citizens from the threat of chemical weapons.

On 18 November, the Technical Secretariat published a report confirming the presence of RCA, related to an alleged incident that took place along confrontation lines in Ukraine. We believe that the report provides an important basis for confirming that RCA were used as a method of warfare in Ukraine. Japan expresses its respect for Ukraine, which cooperated well with the TAV team, collected environmental samples in a manner that met international standards and provided them to the TAV team while maintaining the chain of custody for them, and assures its support for the OPCW's mission to eradicate and prevent the violations of the Convention.

Mr. Chairperson,

I would also like to highlight the recent progress on the Abandoned Chemical Weapons (ACW) project in China, marked by a successful site visit in September this year. During the side event of the 107th

Executive Council, we illustrated how this visit provided a special opportunity for all participants to gain valuable insights into the cooperation between China and Japan, as well as the progress, difficulties, and challenges in the process of excavation, recovery, and destruction of ACW. Japan has consistently dedicated significant human and financial resources to advancing the destruction of ACW in China. As of 31 October 2024, we have declared approximately 142,000 ACW items and successfully completed the destruction of nearly 112,000 of these. A more detailed update on the ACW project will be provided under the relevant agenda item at this CSP session.

Mr. Chairperson,

The emergence of new technologies is a key trend at OPCW and integrating Artificial Intelligence (AI) into CWC operations brings both opportunities and challenges. How can we make the most of the upside of AI and ensure responsible application and guard against misuse at the same time?

Transparency, accountability, and stringent oversight are essential as we adopt AI in this sensitive field. International collaboration is vital, and OPCW's leadership in fostering cooperation is crucial. Japan highly commends the OPCW's initiative in hosting the first OPCW international AI conference in Morocco this October, which addressed the complex issues of AI in relation to the CWC. This event brought together researchers, policymakers, and stakeholders to come up with elements that maximize AI's positive potential while protecting against its risks in the CWC context.

Mr. Chairperson,

This year marks the 30th anniversary of the Matsumoto sarin gas attack and next year the 30th anniversary of the Tokyo subway attack. These are unprecedented chemical terrorism in urban areas where

many people were killed or injured in the despicable attacks by a Non-State actor. And we should remember that victims and their families still suffer lingering pains. We renew our determination to eradicate the use of chemical weapons by anyone, including Non-State actors. In light of our experiences to deal with chemical terrorism, Japan reiterates the importance of ensuring the capability to swiftly respond to any cases of chemical weapons use.

Mr. Chairperson,

Japan, as a responsible State Party, is committed to upholding the principles of the CWC and will make tireless and unwavering efforts to contribute to the CWC. Japan will also continuously consider and act upon what State Parties must do to achieve a world free of chemical weapons. We expect that all States Parties stand together to achieve the goal as envisioned by the Convention.