

Fourth Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions

General Statement by H. E. Mr. Akio EGAWA Ambassador of Japan to Zambia

**Lusaka, Zambia,
10 September 2013**

Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Government of Japan, it is a great pleasure to express my sincere gratitude to the Government of Zambia for warmly welcoming the CCM community to this beautiful city of Lusaka. As a resident Ambassador, I have witnessed the Zambian government's strenuous efforts in preparing for this important meeting, and I assure Zambia Japan's full support during your tenure. Zambia's leadership in promoting the Convention throughout Africa, together with other African states, is an inspiration for all. I recall that Zambia played a pivotal role in hosting a regional meeting in Livingstone in March 2008, just before the adoption of the Convention. I commend Zambia for setting universalization as the main theme of this 4MSP, which could not be more fitting especially in this inaugural period to the First Review Conference in 2015. We also applaud the efforts by other African states and their partners to host two regional conferences, one in Accra (Ghana) and the other in Lomé (Togo) in the last year to promote universalization. Echoing these initiatives, Japan is determined to continue our own efforts by actively promoting the Convention in the Asia-Pacific region through bilateral and multilateral opportunities.

On this occasion, I would also like to commend the outgoing Presidency, Ambassador Kongstad of Norway and his team. Under your successful leadership, much progress has been made for the implementation and promotion of the CCM. We are extremely grateful for the 3MSP Presidency for facilitating numerous meetings and technical workshops, for taking universalization visits abroad, scheduling meetings in an efficient manner, leading consultations on the CCM Implementation Support Unit (ISU), as well as countless other tasks. We recognize that it was not an easy term for the Presidency; however, we highly appreciate your extraordinary vision and commitment to take on every challenge for the future of CCM.

Furthermore, Japan also appreciates the hard work done by the Coordinators, fellow States Parties, international organizations and civil society as well as the interim ISU; the past 3MSP year has marked concrete progress thanks to all of you.

After only three years since coming into effect, membership to this Convention has grown to 83, which constitutes nearly half of the United Nation Member States. More stockpiles have been destroyed, UXO clearance is advancing, assistance to victims is enhancing, and international cooperation and assistance has been extended.

Mr. President,

Japan is committed to implement its stockpile destruction obligation under Article 3. The detailed information on the types and quantities of our stockpiles has been reported through the annual Article 7 transparency reports. I am delighted to announce that our stockpile of more than fourteen thousand cluster munitions will be destroyed in Europe, starting this month. According to schedule, the destruction of all munitions is due to finish by the end of 2015.

Mr. President,

Japan is pleased to have been able to take an active part in the CCM, by continuing to assist countries affected by cluster munitions, despite times of financial austerity. Japan has made significant contributions to Mine Action, which amounts to 57 million USD in the past year alone (2012 March-2013 April). It is our sincere hope that Japan's contribution will have a positive effect for affected states to accelerate their work in implementing their treaty obligations, and to this end we look forward to exchanging ideas over the course of the Meeting.

In this regard, I would like to invite all participants to a side event which we will co-host in partnership with France and Benin on Wednesday, 11th September. Entitled "Training in Demining: The Example of West Africa Training Center for Humanitarian Demining (CPADD)", this event aims to introduce the demining training activities of the CPADD in Benin, to which France and Japan supports as part of our joint efforts to enhance peace and security in Africa. We hope to present a case of good practice on international cooperation, and we look forward to the feedback from participants.

Mr. President,

Despite the aforementioned progress, it is disturbing to hear reports of allegations on the use of cluster munitions in an ongoing conflict. Indeed Japan is deeply concerned by reports on the use of not only cluster munitions but also anti-personnel landmines and more recently chemical weapons. All of these weapons have indiscriminate and devastating impact on civilians, and that is precisely why there are international legal instruments that prohibit the use of these weapons. Japan urges all non-states parties to join the Convention as soon as possible, and to our fellow States Parties to further strengthen universalization efforts, in order to prevent these weapons from being used in the future.

Finally, at this Fourth Meeting of States Parties, Japan hopes that all members will come to an agreement about how the future Implementation Support Unit should be financed. We hope that a solution acceptable to all will be adopted in the end.

Thank you Mr. President.