

Remarks by His Excellency Mr. Takaya Suto
Special Assistant to the Minister for Foreign Affairs
Director of the Center for the Promotion of Disarmament and Non-
Proliferation,
Japan Institute of International Affairs
(Check against delivery)

Director-General, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure to address this workshop attended by States Parties and States not Party to the Chemical Weapons Convention from the Mediterranean Basin, the Middle East and neighboring regions.

I am most delighted to note the steady increase in the number of States Parties to the CWC in recent years. With the present number of 162 States Parties, we are clearly progressing in achieving full universality of this epoch-making Convention. I would like to take this opportunity to commend the efforts of the Director-General, the dedicated staff of the OPCW Technical Secretariat and all the States Parties who have worked tirelessly to advance the goals of the Convention.

But still further efforts are needed. There are still 12 non-signatory States and 20 signatory States that have signed the Convention but not deposited their instruments of ratification. Some of them belong to this Mediterranean and Middle East region, to be welcomed to become full members of the CWC family. In order to achieve full universality their membership is essential. It is truly encouraging to see representatives of some of the signatory States and non-signatory States attending in this workshop. We strongly hope that this workshop will provide States not Party, including those who are not participating in this workshop, a chance to reflect on the significant benefits that joining the Convention will bring to their respective country as well as to the world at large.

In recent years, the danger of WMD terrorism increased. Japan experienced the horrendous impact of chemical terrorism with the nerve gas attacks that were carried out by the Aum Shinrikyo group in the Tokyo subway system 9 years ago. In order to prevent terrorists from developing or acquiring chemical weapons, universal adherence to the Convention and its effective implementation must be strengthened in every corner of the earth. This

includes penalization of activities prohibited under the Convention and effective control of toxic chemicals. In this connection, the recent U.N. Security Council Resolution on Non-proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction decided that all States shall adopt and enforce appropriate effective laws which prohibit any non-State actor to manufacture, acquire, possess, develop, transport, transfer or use nuclear, chemical or biological weapons and their means of delivery, in particular for terrorist purposes. Japan supports the adoption of this Security Council resolution and expects that all the U.N. Member States will comply with it.

The decision of Libyan Arab Jamahiriya to eliminate all its WMD programs and accede to the CWC marks a very encouraging development with regard to universality. The government of Japan highly appreciates Libya's decision, which reflects the growing recognition among nations that in today's world possession of chemical weapons does not serve the security interests of the possessor state. We hope all the signatory States and non-signatory States in the region will make the same courageous decision to eliminate all weapons of mass destruction and join the Convention as early as possible.

The determination to eliminate chemical weapons and become party to the Convention contributes to building confidence and peace among nations by rejecting inhumane means of warfare. Taking the initiative to become party to the Convention would encourage other non-member states in the region to do the same, and contributes to the security of the initiating country.

The Convention offers a variety of benefits to its States Parties in the areas of peaceful application of chemistry, such as transfer of scheduled chemicals and protection against a possible attack or threat with chemical weapons. In the area of national implementation of the Convention, the Technical Secretariat offers a range of programs to assist States Parties in drafting legislation and adopting measures. Furthermore, a number of States Parties are willing to offer bilateral assistance in this area. Japan, for one, has been offering technical assistance in cooperation with the Technical Secretariat by organizing seminars on universality, national implementation and anti-terrorism for countries in the Asian region. Japan will continue sharing its experience in the national implementation of the Convention with States Parties.

Japan attaches great importance to the promotion of disarmament and non-proliferation as a factor that not only contributes to the regional and global security but also to the security of Japan. In fact, one of the principles of the Japanese Official Development Assistance says, “Full attention should be paid to trends in recipient countries’ military expenditures, their development and production of mass destruction weapons and missiles, their export and import of arms and so on...” We strongly hope this workshop will increase awareness of the Convention and the Organization and strengthen national implementation of the CWC in all countries in the region.

I look forward to participating in fruitful discussions during this workshop and expect that the participants will make follow-up in its respective way after the workshop aiming at the advancement of chemical disarmament and the realization of a world free of chemical weapons.

Thank you.