

**Statement of the Government of JAPAN
at the Standing Committee on Mine Clearance, Mine Risk Education
and Mine Action Technologies,
14th June, 2005, Geneva**

**Mr. Co-Chairman,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen**

Japan has been positively carrying out its duties based on Article 6 of the Mine Ban Treaty. In 2004 alone, we allocated more than 22 million US dollars to Mine Action assistance. Since 1998, we have offered over 165 million dollars to over 30 countries, and according to the 2004 Land Mine Monitor Report, our total contribution to Mine Action Assistance for the period 1992 to 2003 was the 4th largest in the world.

At the Nairobi Summit on a Mine Free World last December, Parliamentary Secretary Kawaiii stated that in the next 5 years, Japan will continue to provide Mine Action Assistance on a similar scale, with an emphasis on Asia, the Middle East, and Africa, according to the following 3 principles:

- 1. consolidation of peace,**
- 2. human security, and**
- 3. close cooperation between governments, NGOs, the private sector, and academia. In line with this last principle, Japan has been promoting the research and development of advanced technology to increase the safety and efficiency of demining activities.**

In order to execute this new mine action policy steadily, while instructing our embassies in various mine-afflicted countries to actively seek viable projects, Japan has been promoting closer communication among UNMAS, GICHD, and others.

As an example of concrete results from these measures, since this January, Japan has contributed to mine clearance and related activities in Cambodia, Laos, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, and Sudan, as well as mine risk education in Croatia. Based on the above-mentioned new mine policy, from the viewpoint of emphasizing peace-building through support for ensuring peace and stability in post-conflict countries, in particular Japan donated 7.8 million dollars for mine and UXO investigation and clearance and mine risk education in Sudan. This marks the first step of our reconstruction assistance of 100 million dollars for Sudan, announced at the Oslo Donor's Conference on Sudan last April. We think that mine action is an integrated part of the reconstruction of Sudan, and our approach is in line with paragraph 45 of the Nairobi Action Plan, which calls for the integration of Mine Action Assistance into broader humanitarian and development assistance. Also, following paragraph 50 of the Nairobi Plan, we are endeavoring to find potential new sources of mine action and ways of promoting their activities.

Mr. Co-Chairman,

In order to meet the deadline in accordance with Article 5 of the Mine Ban Treaty of clearing mines in over 20 countries by 2009, we must promote new technologies for more efficient mine clearance. Through such technological innovation, we can reduce the hardship and risk to life of the deminers who work in such a dangerous environment. For these reasons, as a part of our Mine Action Assistance, Japan is making efforts to share the information learned through our support of high technology for the detection and clearance of mines.

Japan is striving for the development of technologies for use in the field. Concretely, we field-tested mine detection and clearance technology in Afghanistan, and in Japan we held evaluation tests on mine detection technology (sensor, access and control technology) and invited officials from GICHD and mine-affected countries to these tests to give their opinions and exchange their views on our new technology. In this way, Japan's position of focusing on technological development does not mean we are thinking lightly of or excluding existing methods. Rather, we believe in the importance of applying each country's special characteristics and maximizing the end result as a whole.

Concerning the field tests in Afghanistan, as soon as we have received a concrete request we plan on providing the necessary equipment. We also plan on developing technology for anti-personnel mine-affected countries which, unlike Afghanistan, have much vegetation. About the testing in Japan, we are currently making improvements from the comments of participants and the results of the tests. In both situations, we are looking for the opportunity to update the state of our progress. We would also like to promote the collaboration of NGOs, both domestic and international.

Mr. Co-Chairman,

Last December, we adopted the Nairobi Declaration and Nairobi Action Plan and reinforced our commitment to a "Mine Free World." Through the above, Japan is aggressively endeavoring to realize this commitment. In supporting the further promotion of Mine Action Assistance along with the rest of the international community, I'd like to take this opportunity to call for the following:

First, for the strong promotion of Mine Action, the strong commitment and ownership of mine-affected countries is essential. In particular, as stated in Paragraph 40 of the Nairobi Action Plan, I'd like to emphasize that Japan believes that mine action should be given a clear position in each country's development plan.

Next, mine action is not important only in and of itself, but is necessary in the broader context of humanitarian action and development assistance. In accordance with Paragraphs 41 and 47 of the Nairobi Action Plan, in order to quickly realize a "mine free world," mine action must be fit as an integrated component into a broader assistance scheme that entails food distribution; return of refugees and IDPs; DDR; the construction of infrastructure such as roadways, irrigation systems, and dams; and agricultural support and health assistance. From this viewpoint, we would like to encourage a collaborative effort among the relevant agencies of mine-affected countries, UN agencies and other international organizations and NGOs, through further promoting a multi-sectoral approach and multiple agencies.

Last, in order to get a timely and precise grasp of mine-affected countries' needs and carry out effective assistance, we have to know the latest up-to-date information on the land mine situation in those countries. Moreover, in bilateral-assistance to mine affected countries, in assistance through international organizations and NGOs, when deciding on and implementing such support, we believe that the role of Japan's embassies in each country is extremely important. From this viewpoint, we strongly recommend close communication with our embassies in the field.

Thank you.