

Statement by Mr. Hiroyuki YAMAMOTO
Minister, Deputy Permanent Representative of Japan
to the Conference on Disarmament
at the Thirteenth Meeting of the States Parties to the
Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling,
Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on
Their Destruction

[Agenda on Mine Clearance- Article 5]

Geneva, 4 December 2013

Thank, Mr. President.

First, I would like to congratulate Bhutan, Germany, Hungary and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela for the completion of their mine clearance obligations this year. We also commend these State Parties on their strong ownership, primarily for mobilizing their resources to conduct their mine clearance operations.

Taking this opportunity we thank those delegations that have provided us with detailed updates on their progress related to mine clearance. We are also pleased with the positive steps taken by the majority of affected States Parties towards their Article 5 clearance obligations.

While there is no doubt that global mine clearance is steadily progressing, it is concerning that even though many years since the Convention has taken effect, some States Parties still have a long way to complete their clearance obligations. We call on all affected States to take full advantage of the vast knowledge accumulated during the past decade with regards to mine action. Such as, seeking support from international organizations, demining operators or advisors, and utilizing available

technology, as well as request for international assistance where necessary.

In order to carry out efficient clearance activities, it is crucial to plan adequately by drafting national strategies and establishing realistic benchmarks based on reliable data and information. For this to be done, appropriate surveys, information collection and data management are of utmost importance. Such thorough planning should be conducive to understanding the remaining work and what needs to be accomplished. It should also serve to simplify the annual submission of Article 7 reports, and ease the burden of compiling large amounts of detailed information required for the extension request process.

In this light, we commend the efforts by South East Asian countries and Latin American countries for assisting each other through south-south cooperation. We also welcome the efforts undertaken by Pacific Island nations for exchanging information on ERW clearance through regional workshops.

Looking towards and beyond the Third Review Conference, Japan fully recognizes the need for acceleration of mine clearance activities. Throughout the past decade, we have placed an emphasis on developing the clearance capacities of affected countries. For example, together with France, Japan has assisted a regional mine action training center in Benin known as the CPADD, in addition to our assistance through the UN, GICHD, and international operators. Moreover, we hope that the facilitation of south-south cooperation through JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency) has led to the acceleration of clearance activities around the world.

Japan shares and upholds the vision for a world free of landmines and explosive remnants of war. We acknowledge the

many challenges ahead before this vision can be achieved, and in this context we renew our commitment to engage in this process through the Convention framework and also through international cooperation.

Mr. President,

My delegation is honored to serve as Co-Chair of the Standing Committee on mine clearance following this meeting. It is a pleasure for my country to work with the other appointed Co-Chairs and look forward to our collaboration to promote prudent discussions and develop the substantive work.

As a major donor to global mine action, we are very much interested in the issues of mine clearance and look forward to participating in a constructive dialogue in the analyzing group, the coordinating committee as well as facilitating the discussions at formal and informal settings.

In the run up to the 3rd review conference we hope that mine clearance activities will accelerate more than ever before. We recognize that we are taking on a significant responsibility to support both the 13 MSP President and the President of the 3rd Review Conference.

It is clear that progress has been made since the Cartagena summit, but many challenges remain, requiring a major commitment by States Parties. For our part, Japan is committed to fulfilling its duties as Co-Chair to mine clearance.

Thank you, Mr President