

**16th Meeting of States Parties to APMBC
(18 - 21 December 2017, Vienna, Austria)
Statement on Universalization by JAPAN**

Thank you, Mr. President,

Universalization of this Convention remains the best way to end all use of anti-personal landmines. Japan remains committed to doing its part to achieve this important goal. Membership of this Convention has reached 163, and will reach 164 fairly soon, which is quite an achievement as it is the largest number of States Parties amongst all the Conventional Arms and Disarmament related Conventions. We can evaluate our efforts towards universalization not only by the number of States Parties, but also by reducing the number of states that produce, export or transfer anti-personal landmines. I have just carefully listened to statements made by Lebanon, Myanmar, Azerbaijan and Palestine.

Mr. President,

While recognizing the progress we have already made, universalization still remains an enduring challenge for each State Party to tackle. Japan attaches great importance to promote

universalization, especially in the Asia-Pacific region where 14 countries are yet to join the Convention, and has encouraged States not party in this region to accede to the Convention through bilateral disarmament dialogue, meetings, and diplomatic demarche via overseas mission. One of the challenges countries are facing is that a State, particularly their military, hesitate to accede to the Convention as long as a neighboring State has not acceded, and vice versa. In our view, transparency and confidence-building measures, including military to military dialogues, are useful to solve such a challenge. Furthermore, it is also important to carry out universalization efforts to those countries simultaneously.

Mr. President,

Accelerating universalization of the Convention needs persistent action by all States Parties and will take considerable time. Japan intends to continue its universalization efforts in the coming year, and we would welcome the opportunity to work with other States Parties, including through the informal Working Group on universalization.

Finally, Mr. President.

High-level attendance to the Meeting of States Parties and their outreach to States not parties would be not only effective, but also indispensable to achieve concrete results in universalization. In this regard, I would like to reiterate my utmost respect and appreciation to the Special Envoys for the Convention, namely, His Royal Highness Prince Mired of Jordan, and Her Royal Highness Princess Astrid of Belgium for their dedication and worthy contributions.

Thank you, Mr. President.