



**Statement delivered by Ambassador Ichiro OGASAWARA**

**Permanent Representative of the Delegation of Japan**

**20<sup>th</sup> Meeting of States Parties**

**Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention**

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Mr. President,

Allow me to congratulate you for your election as the President of the 20th Meeting of States Parties to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention.

The invasion of Ukraine by Russia and the reported killing of innocent civilians, including by the use of landmines and other weapons, are serious violations of international law, including international humanitarian law. Japan takes these violations very seriously.

Since the invasion of Ukraine by Russia, the promotion of the implementation of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention has become even more important, and there is a need for both States Parties and non-States Parties to work together as one.

Over the years, Japan has provided a wide range of assistance, including anti-personnel demining and mine risk education, in cooperation with the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS), relevant international organizations, and NGOs. In addition, in 2021, Japan implemented a program to support the implementation of the Mine Action Project in 18 countries.

This year, Japan has the honor to chair the Committee on the Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance at the intersessional meeting in June. At the same meeting, the Japan International Cooperation Agency

(JICA) experts gave presentations on peacebuilding and development assistance, including mine action that they have conducted.

Japan takes seriously the fact that civilians and others are indiscriminately harmed by anti-personnel mines remaining in post-conflict countries and regions, as well as by the fact that they hinder reconstruction and development. It is important to provide sustained cooperation to stabilize and secure security in such countries and regions through the clearance of anti-personnel mines, assistance to mine victims and capacity building.

In the area of mine clearance assistance, Japan's assistance policy is threefold: (1) continuous support for clearance activities in countries with serious landmine and Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) damages; (2) promotion of regional and South-South cooperation; and (3) comprehensive victim assistance. In addition to landmine clearance and victim assistance, Japan has steadily implemented international cooperation, including rebuilding livelihoods through agricultural promotion after clearance, and preventive assistance such as mine risk education.

Japan considers South-South cooperation assistance, or triangular cooperation, as an effective means of cooperation. Triangular cooperation is an effective tool in mine clearance assistance because it contributes to enhance the ownership of the affected countries while utilizing the past development experience and knowledge of other developing countries.

Japan has long cooperated with Cambodia in the field of mine action. Now, Japan is collaborating with Cambodia in third party countries, including Ukraine, where Cambodia will provide training to Ukraine on how to use land mine detectors by utilizing relevant techniques that Japan shared. We hope that this Japan-Ukraine-Cambodia project will serve as a good

example of triangular cooperation in challenging circumstances.

We would also like to make efforts to further facilitate and strengthen support for mine action by each country, while making use of the knowledge gained from our activities described above. In particular, we will start considering how we can contribute to the Fifth Review Conference scheduled for 2024.

Mr. President,

Strengthening the financial stability of the Convention is an urgent issue for the stable operation of the Convention. We look forward to constructive discussions leading to a greater financial stability.

Japan remains committed to promoting the implementation of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention and will continue its efforts to realize a world free of anti-personnel landmines.

I thank you Mr. President.