

Statement by Ichiro OGASAWARA
Ambassador, Delegation of Japan to the Conference on Disarmament

At the Eighteenth Meeting of the State Parties
to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-
Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction

(Agenda Item 7: General Exchange of views)

Mr. President,

At the outset, I would like to congratulate you on your assumption of the Presidency of the 18th Meeting of the States Parties of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention. I would like to express our appreciation to you Mr. President and to your team for your precious efforts to realize this important meeting despite various constraints due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

I would like to also congratulate Chile for the completion of its landmine clearance in February.

It is encouraging, Mr. President, that the progress is maintained toward a world free of anti-personnel landmines despite current unprecedented circumstances created by the pandemic. I would like to pay tribute to the countries concerned and to all those who are toiling on the ground for their dogged commitment to the Convention.

Mr. President,

Last year, Asako Omi, the Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs, attended the 4th Review Conference held in Oslo, and reiterated Japan's unwavering commitment to the Convention.

True to her statements, in 2019, Japan provided assistance for a wide range of projects, including antipersonnel landmine clearance and risk reduction education, in 23 countries, amounting to approximately 37 million dollars, in collaboration with the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS), other related international organizations, and NGOs. We strongly support the implementation of the Oslo Action Plan in accordance with the Oslo Declaration adopted at the 4th Review Conference.

We are deeply concerned that landmine casualties continue to be recorded despite our strenuous efforts and also current global pandemic. We must continue to emphasize the norms established by the Convention, while incorporating a gender perspective in both our work and our deliberations.

Challenges lie in universalization as well. Although we have now 164 States Parties, some non-state parties reportedly stockpile or produce large numbers of anti-personal mines. We are concerned about the decreasing speed of universalization and must redouble our efforts to this end. As the number of States Parties in the Asia-Pacific region remains relatively limited, Japan will seize various occasions, such as bilateral consultations or regional meetings, to continue to encourage non-states parties of this region to join the Convention.

Mr. President,

Japan believes the highest priority should be given to the consolidation of the financial basis of the Convention. I reiterate the need to strengthen them for the stable implementation of the Convention through continual discussions among the State Parties, while addressing the issue of unpaid assessed contributions.

Lastly Mr. President,

A great deal of challenges remain ahead of us. Japan continue to be committed to the noble causes of the Convention and be happy to be an active part of our concerted efforts towards achieving the goal of “a world without antipersonnel landmines by 2025”.

Thank you, Mr. President.

(506 words)