

Statement by Japan on Universalization

His Excellency Mr. Enrique Banze, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Mozambique

First of all, on behalf of the delegation of Japan, I would like to warmly congratulate you Mr. President, on your appointment to the presidency of the Third Review Conference of the AP Mine Ban Convention. My delegation assures you and the Government of Mozambique of our utmost support throughout this Conference.

Mr. President,

Please allow me to share Japan's views on the universalization aspects of the Convention. Currently, membership to this Convention has reached 161, and we have achieved the largest number of States Parties amongst all the Conventional Arms Disarmament related Conventions. In recent years however, the pace of universalization has slowed down, and countries with large stockpiles and/or produce anti-personnel mines still remain outside of the legal framework. These are enduring challenges for States Parties over the next 5 years, and we regard that it will be a task for each State Party to act upon.

Japan attaches importance to promote universalization in the Asia-Pacific region, and we sincerely welcome Tuvalu's adherence to this Convention in 2011. Nevertheless, compared to other regions that have achieved universal acceptance as seen in the Sub-Saharan Africa region and the EU, among 36 there are still 15 states not party in the Asia-Pacific region, which is the highest number amongst others. Japan has carried out universalization efforts to non-States Parties in our region through bilateral disarmament dialogues, bilateral meetings, and diplomatic demarche via our overseas missions. It was not easy to achieve immediate results within the past 5 years since Cartagena.

Mr. President,

The Asia-Pacific region is hailed as the engine of the global economy, and it is an area where continuous growth and prosperity is anticipated for many years to come. In our region, where economic growth and social development requires stability in many ways, it is of our view that we should make the problem of landmines to become a thing of the past. The military utility of anti-personnel mines in modern warfare is minimal, and considering the risks of illegal use by non-state actors, the risk would outweigh the benefits. Japan intends to continue our universalization efforts tenaciously over the next 5 years.

At many gatherings related to this Convention, His Royal Highness Prince Mired of Jordan has emphasized the importance of reaching out to states not party from a high level representative. We also concur with the view that high level outreach would be more effective to achieve better results. Taking this opportunity, we would like to express our utmost respect and appreciation to Her Royal Highness Princess Astrid of Belgium, who has kindly agreed to become a Special Envoy for the Convention last year, joining with Prince Mired and Juanes. We would also like to express our deep gratitude to His Royal Highness Prince Mired of Jordan for his dedication and contribution so far and for kindly agreeing to remain as Special Envoy.

Last but not least, we would like to express our support to the draft outcome documents, in which clear actions are outlined to promote the Convention and guard its norms. Finally, I would like conclude by reiterating Japan's resolve to continue to call on States not Party to join the Convention as soon as possible.

Thank you for your attention.