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Human Rights Council, 23rd Session

Item 4: ID with COI Syria

Geneva, 4 June 2013

Thank you, Mr. President,

Japan appreciates that the Commission of Inquiry has produced a detailed report in spite of the challenging circumstances which render Syria inaccessible. We find it regrettable that the Syrian government has not accepted a visit by the COI. We call on the government to cooperate fully with the Commission.

The armed violence continues to escalate in Syria. Japan is deeply concerned by the appalling human rights situation including the systematic imposition of sieges and the use of forcible displacement as reported by the COI as well as the deteriorating humanitarian situation, which could spread to the region as a whole. We strongly condemn the continuing extremely grave violations of human rights in Syria to which innocent civilians including many women and children have fallen victim. We are also alarmed by the report of the COI that there are reasonable grounds to believe that toxic chemicals were used in attacks that took place in

March and April. Seizing this opportunity, Japan would like to reiterate its call to all parties to the conflict to fully comply with the relevant international law.

With the recent urgent debate on Syria, the Council requested that the Commission investigate the events in Al Qusayr. Japan expects that the COI will continue to make the utmost efforts to ensure a thorough investigation into the human rights violations and that those responsible are held accountable.

It is vital that all violence in Syria be brought to an immediate halt and that the progress be made toward a political transition led by the Syrian people. In this connection, Japan believes that that the international community should offer its united support to bring all parties concerned to dialogue and supports the initiative to hold a second international conference on Syria in Geneva. Japan will continue to cooperate closely with the international community and to make the utmost diplomatic efforts.

Thank you.