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Human Rights Council, 24th Session

Item 4: General Debate

Geneva, 17 September 2013

Thank you, Mr. President,

Japan continues to be concerned by the grave international human rights and humanitarian violations occurring in Syria. There is a strong likelihood that chemical weapons were used in Syria. The use of chemical weapons is under no circumstances justifiable, and this should not be repeated. We welcome the recent agreement between U.S. and Russia, and call upon Syria to abide by the framework established under the agreement.

The international community should unite in support of an immediate end to all violence and materialization of dialogue among all parties to the conflict. For its part, Japan will continue to actively participate in

and contribute to ending the violence, launching a political dialogue and the process towards improving the deplorable human rights situation.

We appreciate the dedicated efforts of the UN Commission of Inquiry on human rights in DPRK. We request that the COI provide a clear final report which will demonstrate to the international community how severe the situation is in the DPRK, encouraging us all to unite in our appeal to DPRK. We strongly urge the DPRK authorities to fully cooperate with the COI, including by accepting its visit.

The abduction issue is a significant and as yet unresolved issue which concerns Japan's sovereignty as well as the lives and security of its citizens. As such, Japan has determined it national duty to make it an issue of urgent and top priority to be resolved in the current administration. It is vital that it be resolved as quickly as possible given the aging of the victims and their families. As it involves the violation of basic human rights, the abduction issue is a universal one which concerns the entire international community; and we are aware that other

countries besides Japan have been affected as well.

We are concerned by the demonstrations in Egypt which have resulted in casualties and the deteriorating security situation there since political change on July 3rd. We have called for peaceful resolution among opposing parties in Egypt and for all parties involved to avoid conflict and exercise maximum self-restraint and responsibility. We condemn the assassination attempt of the interior minister on September 5th.

Given the importance of the stability and prosperity of Egypt to the Middle East and Africa, We hope that the Egyptian security situation soon stabilize and progress be made toward realizing civilian dialogue with the widespread participation of various groups and on the political process.

Finally, We are concerned by the worsening security situation in the Central African Republic and, with it, the deteriorating human rights and humanitarian situation. We support the measures by OHCHR including

the dispatch of a fact-finding mission, and hope for improvement of the situation. We are also concerned by serious human rights violations, including incidents of sexual violence, occurring in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, as the High Commissioner mentioned. It is essential that the international community show support in addressing the situation.

Thank you.