

【Check Against Delivery】

**STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR IWAMA Kiminori,
Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Japan
to the OSCE
Special Permanent Council, OSCE
23 January, 2025**

Madam Chair,

It is a great pleasure to be able to speak in front of you all today at the OSCE Special Permanent Council, representing Japan as the new Ambassador for the first time.

Let me join my previous speakers in congratulating you, H.E. Ms. Elina Valtonen, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Finland, on assuming the OSCE Chairpersonship 2025.

Madam Chair,

This year marks an important milestone for the OSCE, the 50th anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act. Unfortunately, the world enters this critical period in the most challenging security environment since the Second World War, with the existing international order being seriously challenged.

Japan attaches great importance to the fact that, even under these circumstances, the OSCE, under the strong leadership of its Chair, continues to play an important role in contributing to stability and confidence-building in the region by providing a forum for dialogue.

Madam Chair,

Next month, it will be three years since the beginning of Russia's aggression against Ukraine. It is a unilateral attempt to change the status quo by force and an outrageous act that shakes the very foundation of the international order, and we reiterate our strong

condemnation of the aggression. In this context, we are seriously concerned about the increasing military cooperation between North Korea and Russia, including the engagement in combat against Ukraine of North Korean troops deployed to Russia. This marks a dangerous expansion of the conflict, with serious consequences for European and Indo-Pacific security as expressed in the Foreign Ministers' Joint Statement condemning DPRK-Russia Cooperation on December 16th last year

Thus, while it is becoming increasingly clear that the security of Euro-Atlantic and the Indo-Pacific is inseparable, the security environment in East Asia is also becoming increasingly severe. North Korea continues its nuclear and missile developments, and it launched an IRBM-class ballistic missile this month. Attempts to unilaterally attempt to change the status quo by force also have been continuing and intensifying in the East China Sea and the South China Sea.

We should continue to appeal with one voice on the global stage, including in OSCE fora, that unilateral changes to the status quo by force will not be tolerated anywhere in the world. In this regard, Japan reaffirms its strong support for upholding the principles enshrined in the Helsinki Final Act, which put utmost importance on the principles including sovereign equality, refraining from the threat or use of force and other fundamental values at the core of the OSCE chair's activities.

Madam Chair,

As the first OSCE Partner for Co-operation since 1992, Japan remains committed to increasing the added value of the OSCE partnership by actively disseminating the input of Asian perspectives in OSCE-related meetings and through financial and personnel contributions to OSCE activities. This includes co-organizing the 2024 OSCE Asian Conference with the participation of our State Ministers for Foreign Affairs last October, supporting the OSCE's projects in Ukraine and Central

Asia, and dispatching our personnel to the OSCE election observer missions. In this context, we welcome the development of partnerships including the active collaboration with Asian Partners as a priority area of the Chair's programme for this year.

We look forward to discussing more concrete ways to strengthen our partnership with the Chair in the near future.

I thank you.

(End)