

**Security Council Open Debate on the Maintenance of International Peace and Security,
Security Sector Reform: Challenges and Opportunities, April 2014, Security Council Chamber**

Statement by Mr. Umemoto Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations.

At the outset, I would like to express my appreciation to the Nigerian presidency for its leadership in convening today's open debate on an issue that is important for all of us.

As other colleagues have mentioned, there is no doubt that security sector reform (SSR) is one of the most significant elements in peacekeeping, peacebuilding and conflict prevention. Japan fully recognizes its importance and has implemented programmes in the field, such as those in Afghanistan. Let me point out one challenge in dealing with security sector reform. The concept note prepared for this debate prepared by the presidency (S/2014/238, annex) emphasizes that there is an excessive focus on "hardware" issues relating to training and equipping the security sector, compared to efforts to enhance the delivery of "software"-related support. With regards to this software-related support, I believe that enhancing inclusivity in the security sector, especially in the context of rebuilding post-conflict States, is critical.

The reason is simple. If components and members of the military and police are not inclusive enough in the eyes of local people in post-conflict States, those security institutions may be perceived as either biased or serving only specific political groups. This mistrust between local people and the security sector can easily lead to a relapse of violent conflict as we have often witnessed in the past.

Recognizing these challenges of inclusivity in SSR, last week, along with the Tanzanian and Slovak Missions, the Japanese Mission co-hosted a seminar entitled "Inclusivity in rebuilding States: focusing on the inclusivity in SSR". It was part of a series of seminars on inclusivity in rebuilding States that Japan has co-hosted since last year with Tanzania. In the seminar, prominent panelists consistently emphasized that it was crucial for post-conflict States to invite different political, social and ethnic groups, including traditional leaders and women's groups, into the decision-making and implementation process of building the new security sector. By doing so, these institutions can enjoy legitimacy and impartiality in the local community.

The discussions at the seminar clearly suggest that this dimension of inclusivity should receive more attention and focus in the context of United Nations assistance in SSR. Rather than putting too much focus on the number and equipment of officers in military and police sections, the international community and the United Nations must pay more attention to and show commitment in supporting an inclusive and nationally led process in designing, planning and developing the security sector so that a wider range of local people may participate in the process of creating new security sectors. This inclusive and participatory process will help local people perceive those institutions as their own military and police, functioning based on the rule of law and not on their affiliations to political leaders. I believe that the United Nations, perhaps through its good offices functions, should and can help and facilitate more such inclusive and participatory process among all stakeholders.

In closing, let me reiterate that Japan is ready to continue to provide assistance for Security Sector Reform in post-conflict situations.