**Draft statement by Naoko URAOKA (Attorney/ Deputy Director from Foreign Policy Bureau of Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan)**

**Permanent Representative of Japan**

**to the International Organizations in Vienna**

**on Agenda item 6(b): Ratification and implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption at the 27th Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice,**

**16th May, 2018**

(Combating corruption)

Mr. Chairperson,

Corruption is one of the most serious threats to the international community. It poses a danger to economic growth and sustainable development, and jeopardizes the rule of law. Against this backdrop, combating corruption plays a central role in the promotion of peaceful and fair societies, and in achieving the broader agenda of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Mr. Chairperson,

This year marks the fifteenth anniversary of the adoption of the United Nations Convention against Corruption. The Convention has served as the cornerstone of our collective efforts in the fight against corruption for the last fifteen years. Its steady and effective implementation has become increasingly essential. Last year, Japan ratified this highly important Convention. On this occasion, we would like to renew our commitment to its firm implementation.

Japan will assume the co-chairpersonship of the G20 Anti-Corruption Working Group in 2019. We will continue to make further contributions to the international efforts in tackling corruption as Chair of the group.

(UNCAC Implementation Review Mechanism and Technical Assistance)

Mr. Chairperson,

We welcome the many States Parties that have already commenced the second cycle of the UNCAC implementation review. The review mechanism plays a pivotal role for the effective implementation of the Convention. To this end, we recognize the importance of sharing information on technical assistance needs, identified through the review process. Based on respective needs, Japan has provided capacity building programs through UNAFEI and JICA, among others.

As we place great importance on the financial sustainability of the review mechanism, Japan has continued to provide financial support to the mechanism over the last two years. We hope that the review mechanism will become even more effective and efficient in the future. Japan commenced its first cycle of the review last December. We intend to cooperate closely with reviewing states and the Secretariat of the Convention throughout the process.

(Asset recovery and international cooperation)

Mr. Chair,

The Convention is an important framework for international cooperation for asset recovery. Japan believes that effective implementation of the provisions in Chapter V will contribute to returning illicitly acquired assets to legitimate owners, while ensuring due process of law.

Strengthening mutual understanding on respective legal systems is vital for the optimal use of Chapter V. As part of its efforts to this end, Japan participated in the inaugural meeting of the Global Forum for Asset Recovery. We will continue to engage in regional and global networks to facilitate dialogues and cooperation for asset recovery.

(Closing remarks)

Mr. Chairperson,

In closing, I would like to reaffirm Japan’s staunch commitment towards tackling corruption. As a host country for the upcoming Congress, to be held in Kyoto in 2020, Japan will continue to play an active role in strengthening crime prevention and criminal justice, including the fight against corruption.

Thank you very much for your kind attention.

(END)