

The Chair's Statement of the MDGs Follow-up Meeting

3 June, 2011

Tokyo

I. PREAMBLE

The representatives of the States and Governments, international and regional organizations, and representatives of the private sector, academic institutions and civil society organizations, met in Tokyo, Japan from 2 to 3 June, 2011, for the MDGs Follow-up Meeting co-organized by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Bank and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). The meeting was held to build upon the outcome of the UN high-level plenary meeting on the MDGs in September 2010 where world leaders reaffirmed their commitment to reaching the MDGs, adopting the action-oriented outcome document. The meeting was held at the ministerial/representative level in order to maintain and further drive political momentum towards the achievement of the MDGs by 2015.

The Conference took place after the earthquake and tsunami hit Japan. The participants pledged their solidarity with Japan and its peoples and had no doubt that the country would recover from the devastating effects of this tragedy. The participants stressed that solidarity shown by the international community at a time of crisis can be a key in addressing global challenges.

The participants acknowledged that while significant progress had been made by the global community, there remained so much to be done in order to accelerate that progress towards 2015 through reaching out to the poor and marginalized. In this regard, the participants took note of the Communiqué of the Third TICAD Ministerial Follow-up Meeting in Dakar, Senegal on May 1-2 2011, which reflects the perspective of both the African countries and their development partners and recognizes the importance of efforts toward the achievement of the MDGs. The participants also acknowledged that the MDGs were central to the mission of the United Nations in its advancement of development, peace and human rights in the world and that the actions of the international community must demonstrate the political will and determination to fulfill the promise the world's leaders have made.

The participants recognized the importance of this follow-up meeting which provides a unique occasion for renewed political will and momentum; fulfillment of commitments for tangible results, including sharing ideas and identifying best practices for accelerating progress towards the achievement of the MDGs by 2015, including through reaching out to

the poor and marginalized. It also provides an opportunity to begin discussion beyond 2015, through identifying interventions that are sustainable and continue to yield results in the longer-term.

II. EFFECTIVE APPROACHES FOR THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE MDGS

-Equity

Issues to be highlighted

- Inequalities and disparities based on various overarching factors slow down the progress towards the achievement of the MDG.

Key Elements

- ✓ Focusing on what works in what context
- ✓ Considering what partnerships and coordination mechanisms may be required to achieve results
- ✓ Reaching out to the poor and marginalized
- ✓ Tracking progress and sharing the best practices and lessons

The participants recognized that progress for the achievement of the MDGs has been slowed by inequalities and disparities such as those based on geography, social injustices, social exclusion and marginalization, poverty and underdevelopment, and all forms of discrimination.

The participants also recognized that the focus should be placed on what works in what context and hence consider what partnerships and coordination mechanisms may be required to achieve the desired results. The participants reemphasized the importance of ownership in development, which is one of the important pillars of the Paris Declaration. With a view to this, all participants in development efforts must aim to produce measurable results, which should be duly reported to citizens of all nations.

In this juncture, identifying and focusing on certain specific actions in country contexts such as least developed countries, crisis or conflict countries, and middle-income countries is important for the achievement of the MDGs, particularly reaching out to the poor and the marginalized. In this regard, the participants welcomed the adoption of the Programme of Action of at the LDCIV that provides positive momentum for the sustainable developments of LDCs. Many least developed countries have made progress over the last decade in good governance, the rule of law, the protection and promotion of human rights, and democratic participation. This progress needs to be further enhanced and the governance issues at hand be given further priority. Sharing the best practices and lessons that could also be structured in relation to the contexts is the best way to identify interventions that are most sustainable and continue to yield results in the longer-term.

-Accelerating progress on off-track MDGs

Issues to be highlighted

- Recognizing that the experience of the last ten years shows that sound progress on the MDGs is possible
- Recognizing that accelerating progress on off-track MDGs is possible with a concerted effort, and that tools exist for facilitating this

Key Elements

- ✓ Nationally-owned and led initiatives
- ✓ Diagnostics of bottlenecks and obstacles with broad stakeholder engagement
- ✓ Prioritized, high impact solutions that maximize progress including reaching the poor and marginalized
- ✓ Coordinated approaches to implementing national and sub-national level Action Plans

The participants recognized that progress among countries is often mixed. In almost all countries there is sound progress on some of the MDGs while progress on others is lagging. They also recognized that accelerating progress on off-track MDGs is possible with a concerted effort, and that tools exist for facilitating this. Experience accumulated within and across countries has demonstrated many good practices and sound approaches.

This experience indicates that nationally-owned and led initiatives are key to progress. The presence of bottlenecks and obstacles can be diagnosed through a broad stakeholder engagement. Using the knowledge of good practices, it is possible to develop prioritized high-impact solutions to the most important bottlenecks including reaching the poor and marginalized, so that their removal will result in accelerated progress on the MDGs. This requires coherent and coordinated approaches to, among others, partner country-led UN MDG Acceleration Action Plans supported by development partners both at national and sub-national levels.

III. KEY ACCELERATORS

3-1 Accelerating Results in Health and its related MDGs

Issues to be highlighted

- Maternal, newborn and child health (MNCH) is one of the most pressing challenges where globally concerted efforts are urgently needed.
- Progress made on other health-related MDGs such as HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria must be sustained and extended.
- Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) are emerging global challenges not only in beyond-MDGs era but also threatening the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals

including the MDGs.

Key Elements

- ✓ Effective package of interventions including nutrition through ensuring continuum of care needs to be delivered
- ✓ Delivering evidence-based, cost-effective and population-wide interventions as well as strengthening of health systems including achieving universal coverage are effective approaches not only for addressing NCDs but also for achieving the MDGs
- ✓ Strengthen partnership and coordination mechanisms at local, national, regional and global levels
- ✓ Commitment, ownership and accountability to ensure sustainability

The participants recognized that accelerating progress on the health MDGs is closely associated with sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth, and with the achievement of all MDGs. Among them, the participants reaffirmed that maternal, newborn and child health is one of the most pressing challenges where globally concerted efforts are urgently needed, including delivering promises made in the G8 Muskoka Initiative and realizing the ambitions of the UN Secretary-General’s Global Strategy on Women and Child Health, while also recognizing the progress made on other health-related MDGs such as HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria must be sustained and extended.

The participants reaffirmed that the significance of achieving MDGs 4 and 5 through identifying vulnerable and marginalized women and children, specific quality actions, strengthening the capacity and governance of health systems, and how cutting-edge strategies, such as a more effective package of interventions including nutrition and reproductive health services, can be robustly and equitably delivered to the widest possible number of women and children at risk, by ensuring a continuum of care from pre-pregnancy to after childbirth as shown in a MNCH assistance model “EMBRACE” which Japan proposed at the High-level Plenary Meeting of the 65th United Nations General Assembly on the MDGs to narrow the gap. In this regard, the participants reaffirmed that a broad approach including better infrastructure, safe water and sanitation, and other social developments is important.

The participants further noted that improving MNCH and strengthening health systems are also relevant and complementary to furthering efforts to address infectious diseases such as HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria.

The participants also reaffirmed that non-communicable diseases (NCDs) are emerging global challenges and recognized the significance of addressing NCDs by delivering evidence-based, cost-effective and population-wide interventions, addressing bottlenecks in

the strengthening of health systems as well as achieving universal coverage.

The participants welcomed that there was a genuine opportunity to eradicate polio in coming years and called for concerted urgent action to achieve eradication.

The participants highlighted the importance of globally concerted efforts built on strengthening partnership and coordination mechanisms with diverse partners based on the notion of partner countries' ownership, greater focus on monitoring and accountability to ensure that our collective actions achieve the highest possible impact and results over the longest period of time.

3-2 Accelerating Progress in Education and its related MDGs

- **Issues to be highlighted** Remarkable improvement in education has been achieved in some countries, but progress is uneven among and within countries. Without accelerating actions, the MDG2 will not be achievable.
- Quality education for all expands human potentials, offers a strong foundation for development and poverty eradication, and acts as a catalyst for the accelerated achievement of other MDGs.

Key Elements

- ✓ Emphasis on the poor and marginalized
- ✓ Promote girl's education
- ✓ Acquisition of both cognitive and non-cognitive skills
- ✓ Improve the quality of education with attention to learning outcomes
- ✓ Comprehensively improve the learning environment
- ✓ Involve children, parents and communities
- ✓ Focus on life-long learning and skills development for job creation and poverty eradication
- ✓ Importance of evidence to inform policy

The participants recognized that remarkable progress on education has been achieved, with millions more children now in school as a result of more effective education and development policies and sustained national investments. Yet it has been uneven among and within countries and there needs to be more emphasis on the poor and marginalized, particularly those in conflict-affected countries and in emergency situations, on girls education and on learning outcomes and acquisition of both cognitive and non-cognitive skills such as problem solving, teamwork and communications. The participants also concurred that there is an opportunity for peace building and reconstruction through education.

The participants recognized the significance of improving the quality of education, increasing both access and retention of girls in schools and ensuring equity, starting with

early childhood development in order to achieve the education-related MDGs as well as Education for All (EFA) goals by 2015. In this regard, the participants expressed their appreciation of the outcome of the Tenth Meeting of the High-Level Group on EFA held in Jomtien, Thailand in March 2011. Improving access to education and quality education for all and improving access to education together expand human potential and also offer a strong foundation and act as catalysts for the accelerated achievement of other MDGs such as health, and gender as well as for sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth.

The participants also acknowledged the importance of improving the learning environment comprehensively, through, among other actions, increasing the number of well trained teachers engaging children, parents and communities, and sustaining attention beyond enrollment and completion to ensuring learning outcomes—and determining whether school-leavers have the necessary knowledge and skills to obtain jobs and thrive in a competitive global economy. In addition, they reconfirmed the effective use and allocation of resources is vital to realize improvement in education. There is a need to better identify what partnerships and coordination mechanisms may be required to achieve the desired results. To this end, it is also important to take a holistic approach to education reform by strengthening national education systems. Such reform would entail going beyond providing inputs such as classrooms, teacher training and textbooks, to also improving education policies, incentives and school processes to promote better learning outcomes.

The participants emphasized that, by identifying the bottlenecks and obstacles which hinder the progress to narrow the implementation gaps, the international community should share effective and sustainable interventions and approaches in country contexts among themselves to address those bottlenecks, produce concrete and sustainable results on the ground, and make countries' education systems work. The participants therefore committed themselves to focus their efforts on good practices, like improving the quality of teachers as well as investing in girl's education. The participants recognized that the innovative approaches for education financing could strengthen such efforts in the education sector and highlighted the work on the task force on Innovative Financing for Education.

The participants also recognize that as in health, education outcomes are greatly influenced by factors beyond education policy and services, such as early childhood nutrition and stimulation, access to health care, clean water and safe drinking water and sanitation, infrastructure and social protection.

3-3 Narrowing the Implementation Gap: National and Community-based Approaches

Issues to be highlighted

- Bottlenecks that thwart effective implementation slow progress towards the MDGs and thus need to be addressed at national and local levels.
- Acceleration of the MDGs can take place through participatory analysis of bottlenecks with a partnership approach and implementation of focused plans of action that bring together the efforts of a range of stakeholders.

Key Elements

- ✓ Enhancement of partnership and cooperation among various stakeholders, multi-sectoral and comprehensive approach, protection and empowerment, and governance and capacity development
- ✓ Sound and evidence-based knowledge sharing
- ✓ Nationally-led scaled up implementation effort to remove bottlenecks at national and local levels
- ✓ Further coordination between bilateral and multilateral cooperation and diversification of stakeholders
- ✓ A partner country led United Nations MDG Acceleration Framework
- ✓ People-centered approach
- ✓ Innovative approaches

The participants acknowledged that the presence of bottlenecks often thwarts implementation efforts to accelerate the achievement of the MDGs, and needs to be addressed in a coherent and coordinated manner at national and local levels.

The participants acknowledged bottlenecks including structural shortfalls such as poor service delivery, capacity constraints, monitoring gaps lack of coordination among stakeholders in relevant sectors, financing as well as unequal progress among regions, poverty, gender discrimination and disempowerment, ethnic groups, and other factors including disability and displacement creating refugees and IDPs.

The participants recognized that the enhancement of partnership and cooperation among various stakeholders, multi-sectoral and comprehensive approaches, protection and empowerment, and governance and capacity development are initiatives based on people-centered approaches which are critical to contributing to the achievement of the MDGs.

They also recognized that sound and evidence-based knowledge sharing and a nationally-led scaled up implementation efforts with the full involvement of stakeholders would contribute to remove bottlenecks at national and local levels to accelerate the achievement of the MDGs.

They welcomed further coordination between bilateral and multilateral cooperations and also welcomed diversification of actors and stakeholders including the private sector and civil society.

The participants concurred that a partner country-led United Nations MDG Acceleration Framework, which builds on existing country knowledge and experiences as well as national policies and planning processes is a useful tool to apply, wherever most appropriate, as a systematic way of identifying bottlenecks and possible high-impact solutions, leading to a concrete plan of action with coordinated roles for all stakeholders. They also proposed that the implementation of such action plans be given priority by development partners, citing relevant examples as they become available.

The participants reaffirmed that the people-centered approach, which is emphasized in human security, is an effective approach to narrow implementation gaps in the progress of the MDGs.

The participants recognized the need for innovative approaches, some of which have emerged in the South, such as Conditional Cash Transfers, to be disseminated more widely.

The participants acknowledged that innovative financing for development has already achieved successful results in the health sector. Nonetheless, much more needs to be done including in other sectors. So the participants recognized the value for exploring new innovative finance mechanisms and strengthening and scaling up existing ones, where appropriate, given their potential to contribute to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, while acknowledging that these mechanisms should supplement not be a substitute of traditional sources of finance. The participants welcomed the ongoing work in this regard, including by the Leading Group on Innovative Financing for Development and the Task Force on International Financial Transactions for Development.

3-4 Partnership for Sustained, Inclusive and Equitable Economic Growth

Issues to be highlighted

- The importance of sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth and the significance of development cooperation in realizing it
- The need to strengthen the partnership among various development actors to use different resources effectively to maximize impact

Key Elements

- ✓ National ownership and leadership are of utmost importance in the development process.
- ✓ Catalytic role of development cooperation in achieving economic growth

- ✓ Vital role of development cooperation in building foundation to create opportunities for more people to participate in and benefit from the growth process
- ✓ Respect for ownership, focus on development results, incorporation of environmental and debt sustainability
- ✓ Strong, responsible, transparent and accountable partnership among various actors
- ✓ Productive capacity building as a development multiplier
- ✓ The importance of incorporating environmental sustainability in achieving sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth.

The participants reaffirmed the importance of sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth in achieving the MDGs. They recognized that national development strategies formulated under developing countries' ownership and leadership is of the utmost importance in realizing such growth and underscored the significance of domestic resource. In this connection, the participants expressed that G20 Seoul Development Consensus and its Multi-Year Action Plan adopted at the G20 Seoul Summit last November would contribute to the global efforts to achieve sustained, inclusive, and equitable growth.

Participants reaffirmed the global partnership for development and recalled the Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development and the Doha Declaration on Financing for Development.

The participants reiterated that in addition to the domestic resources of developing countries, investment and trade, ODA, South-South cooperation, contribution from international and regional institutions innovative financing for development and assistance from private sector including foundations and civil society organizations, with due distinction of each resource, have vital roles to play in realizing sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth. The participants stressed that all actors possess means to reduce global poverty. The partnership among recipient countries and various development actors must be strong, responsible, transparent and accountable. In this regard, the participants welcomed the efforts of the G8 Deauville Accountability Report.

The participants concurred that development cooperation can play a catalytic role in achieving economic growth by supporting developing countries' efforts in establishing economic and social infrastructure and building productive capacity, thus attracting private investment, promoting trade and transferring technology and knowhow. In particular, South-South, tri-angular and regional cooperation mechanisms for access to technologies, knowledge and information in efforts to promote economic growth should be acknowledged and encouraged further.

For the economic growth to be sustained, inclusive and equitable, development cooperation plays a vital role in supporting developing countries' efforts in building a foundation to create opportunities for more people to participate in and benefit from the growth process. They recognized the importance of enhanced education and health for all in order to realize such growth. Concrete measures include assistance to the vulnerable in the fields of health, education and food security, and strengthening governance as well as individual and institutional capacity development.

In order to ensure development results, development cooperation should respect the developing countries' ownership and align with national development policy. Environmental and debt sustainability should also be incorporated.

The participants recognized the importance of incorporating environmental sustainability in achieving sustained inclusive and equitable economic growth.

IV CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

-Climate Change

Issues to be highlighted

- There is a deep and complex interconnection between adverse effects of climate change and other global challenges.
- Climate change should be properly addressed in the process of achieving the MDGs successfully and especially the MDG 7 related to environmental sustainability.

Key Elements

- ✓ Climate Change is one of the most pressing common challenges in this century that needs a global and coordinated response
- ✓ Comprehensively tackle the issue of climate change as well as development.
- ✓ Promote cooperation for sustainable and low-carbon growth
- ✓ Comprehensively tackle the issue of climate change in the process of achieving the MDGs successfully and especially the MDG 7 related to environmental sustainability.

The participants recognized that climate change is one of the most pressing common challenges in this century that needs a global and coordinated response, reaffirming the objectives and principles of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, in particular the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities.

The participants also emphasized a deep and complex interconnection between adverse

effects of climate change and other global challenges such as poverty, food security, growing inequality, and increased natural disasters. In this context, the participants emphasized the need to comprehensively tackle the issue of climate change in the process of achieving the MDGs successfully and especially the MDG 7 related to environmental sustainability.

The participants shared the view that climate change poses serious adverse effects on developing countries especially, LDCs, SIDs and Africa and marginalized communities and nations, which negatively influences the progress of the MDGs. In this regard, the participants reaffirmed that concerted efforts among the international community are needed to bring a successful conclusion to the upcoming 17th Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP17). The participants will intensify cooperation toward COP17 and will enhance cooperation in adapting their economies and societies to climate change as well as achieving deep cuts in global greenhouse gas emissions.

The participants stressed the importance of expeditious and steady implementation of Fast-Start Financing on climate change and welcomed such implementations by some countries as well as initiatives to promote sustainable and low-carbon growth, such as preparation of “Low-Carbon Growth and Sustainable Development Strategy in Africa” under the TICAD Process.

-Food Security

Issues to be highlighted

- The continuing global food price volatility is driving increased poverty and hunger and poses a serious obstacle to achieving the MDGs.
- It is compelling to address these issues through utilizing experiences including lessons learnt from the rise in global food prices in 2008 as well as past successful experiences.

Key Elements

- ✓ Promote efforts based on the Five Rome Principles on Sustainable Global Food Security
- ✓ Strengthen the capacity of food supply focusing on the most vulnerable such as smallholder farmers and women
- ✓ Promote comprehensive support based on a value-chain analysis and innovative approaches
- ✓ Address the issue of nutrition, health, education, biodiversity, and access to water and sanitation, as well as well-designed and gender specific social protection systems

The participants reaffirmed the importance of promoting efforts based on the Rome Principles, implementing the L’Aquila Food Security Initiative (AFSI) and the G20

Multi-Year Action Plan on Development, as well as advancing the Global Partnership for Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition to address key challenges to sustainable food security. In particular, they stressed the importance of pursuing a “twin-track approach” aiming both at targeting hunger and stimulating agricultural productivity, which is one of lessons learnt from the continuing global food price volatility as well as past successful experiences.

The participants reemphasized the significance of strengthening the capacity of food supply focusing on smallholder farmers and women, who are most vulnerable and in food insecure, in order to address the issues of poverty and hunger.

The participants also underlined the significance of promoting comprehensive support for the increased production and productivity, the reduction of post-harvest losses and the improvement of market and trade system through, among others, capacity building based on a value-chain analysis. The participants also reaffirmed the importance of enhancing innovative systems and approaches.

The participants acknowledged the critical importance of cost-effective and cross-sectoral interventions which address the issues of nutrition, health, education, biodiversity, and access to water and sanitation, as well as well-designed and gender specific social protection systems, such as school feeding, food for work, mother and child health care and nutrition programmes for building resilience.

-Human Security

Issues to be highlighted

- The human security concept may contribute to the achievement of the MDGs.

Key Elements

- ✓ Comprehensive collaboration among stakeholders
- ✓ The participation of communities, particularly the poor and marginalized

The participants commended the people-centered approach of the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security as a laudable initiative towards the achievement of the MDGs.

The participants stressed the right of people to live in freedom and dignity, free from poverty and despair. The participants recognized that all individuals, in particular vulnerable people, are entitled to freedom from fear and freedom from want, with an equal opportunity to enjoy all their rights and fully develop their human potential.

The participants took note of the ongoing efforts to define the notion of human security which was referred to in UNGA resolution 64/291, and recognized that it may contribute to the achievement of the MDGs through the comprehensive collaboration among stakeholders, ensuring sustainability, and providing quality service delivery.

The participants recognized the importance of focusing on the needs of the individuals for the achievement of the MDGs. The participation of communities, particularly the poor and marginalized, is the key to the process of development.

V. WAY FORWARD

4-1 Orchestrating Our Efforts

The participants welcomed that discussion over the achievement of the MDGs including poverty eradication had been and would be taking place in various fora, including cross-agency efforts in the High-level Plenary Meeting of the 65th United Nations General Assembly on the MDGs followup, /the UNSG's Global Strategy for Women's and Children's Health G8, G20, LDCIV, Rio+20, the EFA (Education for All), ECOSOC, Leading Group on Innovative Financing for Development and regional organization such as AU and ASEAN. Participants acknowledged that linking relevant on-going global processes is important in concerting international efforts for common challenges. In particular, they stressed that the Fourth High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness to be held this November in Busan, would be an important opportunity to re-galvanize political momentum to reach the MDGs.

The participants stressed that all actors possess means to reduce global poverty and are responsible for initiating action for progress. The participants emphasized that all actors, both developed and developing countries as well as other stakeholders, should have a voice to shape and influence the direction of the international policy debate over poverty eradication through numerous fora and mobilize resources for its realization. The partnerships among these actors need to be further enhanced in order to reinvigorate the political momentum towards the achievement of the MDGs.

The participants recommended a partner country-led UN MDG Acceleration Framework, which builds on existing country knowledge and experiences, as well as national policies and planning processes, be applied wherever most appropriate.

The participants further recommended that the implementation of the resulting Acceleration Action Plans, including those completed in 2010, would be given priority by development partners through their current plans, operations and processes wherever appropriate.

4-2 Renewing the Consensus for Longer Terms

The participants reaffirmed that the achievement of the MDGs by 2015 is one of the most compelling global objectives. Even after 2015, poverty eradication must remain a focus of the international community. All stakeholders need to redouble their efforts towards the achievement of the MDGs.

The participants also acknowledged that challenges such as climate change, food security and other resource security and disasters of unusual scale and nature, which all stakeholders should work together to tackle, have persisted, since the establishment of the MDGs. Participants acknowledged that achieving well-being for all cannot be overstressed now more than ever. Concepts such as equity, mutual support, and sustainability would be guiding principles in this rapidly changing global landscape.

The participants concurred that given the importance of growth in attaining the current MDGs, it is imperative to give ample focus on growth in the remaining period for attaining the MDGs and also periods even beyond 2015. Growth is not end in itself, but a means to pursue all aspects of the well-being of humanity. In this context, growth should be viewed and pursued in a sustained, inclusive, and equitable manner and in so doing, the capacity of governments, including increased transparency and accountability and effective use of resources, of institutions and of individuals needs to be strengthened.

H.E. Mr. Takeaki Matsumoto, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan and the chair of the meeting, highly appreciates constructive contributions by Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Ethiopia, France, Ghana, India, Norway, Senegal, South Africa, Spain, Thailand, Republic of Korea, Rwanda, the United Kingdom, ADB, ADBI, GAVI, GFATM, IPPF, OECD-DAC, UNAIDS, UNFPA, WFP, and Oxfam International and particularly co-organizers, UNDP, UNICEF, the World Bank and JICA, which have been instrumental in improving this Chair's statement.