

Statement by Mr. Takashi Uto
Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan
At the General Debate of the 59th Session of the Commission on the
Status of Women

10 March 2015

Madame Chairperson,

On behalf of the Government of Japan, I would like to express my sincere congratulations to Ms. Vajrabhaya, chair of Commission on the Status of Women, and all of the members of the Bureau on the assumption of their positions.

Madame Chairperson,

20 years has passed since the adoption of Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. For the past 20 years, many actors, including the UN and the UN member states, have been working hard to implement the Platform for Action with hope and enthusiasm, and have made substantial progress toward a gender-equal society. At the same time, there are many remaining challenges which we must face, including poverty, violence, conflict, terrorism, and social norms that deprive women of equal social, economic, and political opportunities. The need to accelerate the implementation of the Platform for Action is ever greater.

Since Beijing+15, Japan has been formulating and implementing domestic policies based on the Third Basic Plan for Gender Equality 2010 in a comprehensive and systematic manner. For example, in order to eliminate violence against women, we have taken legislative initiation and formulated plans in such areas as the protection from spousal violence, the protection of youth from harmful information that include sexual and violent elements, tackling trafficking in persons, and others. Currently, we are mounting efforts to formulate the Fourth Basic Plan for Gender Equality to promote further progress.

Moreover, under Prime Minister Abe's strong leadership, Japan is now working seriously to strengthen support, both domestically and internationally, to women's prosperity and capacity building in order to create a society in which women shine. For example, our Government submitted a bill to the Diet to have national government, local governments and private companies to formulate and publicize action plan on recruitment, promotion and training for promoting women's active participation in work place. We are also planning to once again convene the "World Assembly for Women: WAW! Tokyo" on the 28th and 29th August in Tokyo to discuss women's empowerment in a comprehensive manner.

In addition, from March 14 to 18, the 3rd UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction will be held in Sendai, Japan. In this conference, women's participation and leadership in disaster risk reduction will be discussed.

Madame Chairperson,

We sincerely hope that our commitment to contribute 3 billion US dollars to developing countries in the course of three years will play a role of seeds that will sprout and grow into a more prosperous future for women and girls. Furthermore, our contributions to UN Women have increased tenfold compared to our contribution two years ago. And the UN Women Tokyo liaison office will open this summer. Japan looks forward to strengthening our cooperation with UN Women even further.

The elimination of violence against women in armed conflict is a pressing issue. Japan would never allow violence against women, and would like to call our urgent attention to the construction a culture of zero-tolerance. We made a decision last month to contribute 1.6 billion US dollars to UN Women and the Team of Expert of SRSG on Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict to support its projects in countries like South Sudan, Central Africa, and Democratic Republic of Congo.

Madame Chairperson,

The concrete agenda which must be addressed may have changed in accordance with shifts in society over the last 20 years. However, we would like to recall the spirit of the Beijing Declaration on this anniversary of the adoption of the

Platform for Action, and renew our commitment and take courage in the steadfast implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action with all of you.

Thank you very much.