

*Speech by H.E. Mr. Kentaro SONOURA, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan*

Excellencies, Distinguished delegations,

Ladies and Gentleman,

First, allow me to express my appreciation for being given the opportunity today to express Japan's position at this International Support for Ukraine Conference. I would also like to express my respect to everyone from the Ukrainian government, and the European Union who have contributed to holding this meaningful, international conference.

A quarter century ago, the Berlin Wall collapsed, the Cold War ended, and Ukraine made a fresh start as a nation state.

A long time has passed since then. Now, what we hear from Ukraine is news of the war. The values we have so far upheld as important, particularly the rule of law, sovereignty, and territorial integrity, have been violated, and there have been attempts to change the status quo by force. In Asia, there are similar threats. The situation surrounding Ukraine is shaking the foundation of the basic rules of the international community, so although this is a problem for Europe, it is also a very grave problem for the whole global community, including Asia.

But, what can be done to bring peace, stability, and prosperity for Ukraine?

First, the international community should make united efforts to ensure that all relevant parties fully implement the Minsk agreement that was reached on February 12.

In eastern Ukraine, the situation remains unstable, as gunfire and battles have continued in some areas even after the Minsk agreement. Objective verification of the withdrawal of heavy weapons by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe should be fully ensured.

Second, Ukraine's institutions of state and society should be strengthened. For Ukraine to become a country with resilience and sustainability, it is essential to carry out bold and comprehensive reforms.

It will be impossible to ensure the stability and prosperity of Ukraine without such reforms, including the promotion of anti-corruption efforts, judicial reform, and national integration.

Japan will contribute to the peace process in Ukraine and support its nation-building efforts.

As the first step in its contribution to the peace process, Japan has recently provided new financial assistance to increase the staff of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine. Moving forward, Japan will further strengthen its assistance.

Meanwhile, I would like to express my respect to all OSCE officials involved in this mission under such difficult circumstances.

To assist Ukraine's nation building, Japan is steadily implementing assistance worth approximately 1.84 billion

dollars, which is the largest scale on an individual country basis.

First, in order to improve the economic situation, Japan announced an assistance package worth totaling around 1.5 billion dollars in 2014, including about 1.1 billion dollars for the modernization of the sewage treatment plant, and 100 million dollars in financial support.

This year, Japan also announced additional financial support worth 300 million dollars, and it decided to extend a non-project grant aid for the purchase of the products, including medical equipment.

Moreover, the Japan-Ukraine Investment Agreement, which was signed in February, will further promote foreign investment that will be essential to Ukraine's growth. We

are expecting further improvement of the investment environment.

Second, Japan is considering to send Japanese experts to Ukraine in such fields as economic and fiscal management and governance.

In order to restore democracy, Japan has already been supporting the democratization process, through the dispatch of election monitors and technical cooperation provided by the Japan International Cooperation Agency in the field of governance, including the invitation of six lawmakers at Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine to Japan this month.

In March, we also invited lawmakers in charge of judicial policy to Japan. We are expecting that their experiences in Japan will contribute to judicial reform in Ukraine.

Third, in order to promote national dialogue and integration, Japan is cooperating with international organizations in assisting internal displaced persons and supporting reconstruction in eastern Ukraine.

As the next chair of the G7, Japan will further enhance its engagement with, and support for, Ukraine, in order to achieve a peaceful and diplomatic solution in cooperation with its G7 partners and other like-minded countries.

We are expecting that this conference will set forth a specific roadmap toward early implementation of reforms, including the new economic reform program approved by the IMF Executive Board in March, and will demonstrate

the Ukrainian government's commitment to the reform initiative.

We are also expecting that this conference will send the message that the international community will make concerted efforts to support Ukraine's reform efforts. I pray that peace, stability, and prosperity will arrive in Ukraine without delay.

Thank you very much.