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Kishida:

Japan ready to cooperate...

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As a Persian proverb goes, "Never use your teeth on knots that can be untied with your hands," reaching the final nuclear agreement through dialogues is a good example showing that other issues of international community can also be resolved through dialogues. Iran is a major power in the Middle East. The international community, including Japan, strongly hopes that Iran, as a responsible major power, will make further contributions to bringing peace and stability into the region and the world. Japan also would like to make such contributions to making regional and global peace and stability.

What is your opinion about the performance of Zarif during the nuclear talks with the P5+1 group?

I assess the performance of Foreign Minister Zarif in the nuclear negotiations highly. I would like to express my respect for all the parties involved in the negotiations that led to the final agreement on the nuclear issue, which had continued for over 10 years. Japanese people are often called perseverant, and I would like to express my respect with regard to the perseverance of Foreign Minister Zarif, who engaged in the negotiations in a persistent manner over a long period of time. The fact that the agreement was reached is of course important, and I believe that it is even more important to implement this agreement. I am hoping that the Iranian government will demonstrate its perseverance in this regard and implement the agreement in a steady manner. Japan will also assist with the implementation of the agreement.

Following the nuclear agreement, President Hassan Rouhani said that Iran is ready to expand economic ties with all states and is open to foreign investment. What is Iran's position in Japan's foreign trade and investment?

Iran has a population of about 80

million people, and possesses abundant natural resources such as crude oil and natural gas, so it is a large country with great potential. It is therefore a very attractive country for companies, not only from Japan, but also the rest of the world. Iran has the potential to develop extensively by accepting economic exchanges with foreign countries and foreign investment. I welcome that President Hassan Rouhani has announced that Iran is ready to accept foreign investments.

Japan is also ready to cooperate with Iran for its economic development. What is important is the implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action in a steady manner and development of trust building between Iran and the international community.

Through this process, Japanese companies will reactivate their activities in Iran. The government of Japan will support activities of such companies.

Furthermore, in order to facilitate investment in Iran, I would like to welcome the progress of negotiations on the investment agreement between Japan and Iran that shall protect the activities of Japanese companies in Iran. Executive Japanese businessmen will accompany me during my upcoming visit. I truly hope that economic relations between the two countries will develop further.

So far, the core of economic relations between Japan and Iran has been in the energy sector, and it will account for a significant part of the relationships between the two countries in the future. Nevertheless, I think Iran is more than just a supplier of oil. Japan and Iran have rich cultures and eternal histories, and as both countries are located in Asia, we can cooperate and develop mutually in various fields, such as environment, health care, culture, education, tourism, transportation, fine arts, and sports. I would like to exchange opinions with Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif in the mentioned fields.