

Statement by Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs,

Mr Shunsuke TAKEI,

London Somalia Conference, 11 May 2017

Somalia is right at its watershed. I would like to express my great appreciation and respect for the initiative shown by our host Prime Minister May, and co-hosts President Farmaajo and UN Secretary General Guterres in holding this conference at this most important time.

In Somalia, works for strengthening national security and economic recovery should be brought forward simultaneously.

At TICAD VI, the Sixth Tokyo International Conference on African Development held last year, the theme of promoting social stability was a key point of discussion.

Recognizing that capacity building of Somalia itself is essential for the stabilization of the Horn of Africa, since 2007 Japan has provided assistance totaling 442 million US dollars in the areas of strengthening security, humanitarian assistance, and infrastructure development.

Japan's Self Defense Forces have also carried out counter-piracy operations in the Gulf of Aden and off the coast of Somalia.

It is indispensable for the peace and prosperity of the whole of the International Community to ensure free and open maritime order and maintaining the rule of law in the important sea lane of the Indo-Pacific, including off the coast of Somalia. Therefore, Japan will continue to make efforts to achieve a free and open Indo-Pacific Ocean.

The role AMISOM has played for the improvement of Somalia's security has been quite significant, and I would like to extend my deep admiration for the countries contributing to the operation.

The core of nation-building is human resource development. Since 2011, Japan has trained more than 150 Somali nationals who have now gone on to hold active roles in the fields of health, infrastructure development, agriculture, fisheries, and counter-terrorism. In addition, Japan provides assistance for the empowerment of youth, namely vocational training for youth and employment creation.

Furthermore, in March this year, Japan decided to make a contribution of 26 million US dollars in response to the famine being faced in the part of the Middle East and the Horn of Africa, including Somalia. I would like to commend the timely commencement of the assistance by the International Community under the leadership of the United Kingdom and

the United Nations, and hope for the earliest possible resolution of this humanitarian crisis.

This conference demonstrates afresh the solidarity of Somalia and the International Community. I would therefore like to conclude my remarks by renewing Japan's determination to continue its assistance working alongside Somalia.

Thank you.

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