

Section 2

Japan's International Cooperation (Development Cooperation and Response to Global Issues)

1 Development Cooperation (ODA, etc.)

(1) Development Cooperation Charter and Strategic Use of ODA

More than sixty years have passed since Japan started its Official Development Assistance (ODA)¹ in 1954. Japan's development cooperation policy including ODA has greatly contributed to securing the peace, stability, and prosperity of the international community and consequently the national interests of Japan for many years.

On the other hand, the world is facing more diverse and complex challenges transcending national borders as the world becomes increasingly globalized. Furthermore, considering the growing roles of recent non-ODA public/private funds and support from emerging countries, it has become even more important to bring together the wisdom and actions of developing countries as well as developed countries and various resources apart from the central government (corporations, local governments, NGOs, etc.). In this new era, it is essential for ensuring Japan's national interests that Japan should consider development cooperation as a part of "Proactive Contribution to Peace" based on the principle of international cooperation, and strategically use ODA to address

development and human rights issues while continuing to adhere to the course that Japan has taken to date as a peace-loving nation. Under the Development Cooperation Charter established based on this recognition (decided by the Cabinet in February 2015), there is a need to steadily implement the "Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)," the development goals for the whole international community, including developed countries. Taking into consideration the recommendations made by the Advisory Board for ODA held under the leadership of Foreign Minister Kono in 2018, it is also necessary to put unremitting efforts into reviewing the approach to the implementation of ODA, so as to enable diverse entities including NGOs and corporations from the private sector, to put greater effort into resolving development issues. On top of that, it remains vital to establish a fully adequate system in order to secure the safety of Japanese people engaged in international cooperation abroad.

For Japan, development cooperation is one of the most important diplomatic tools. For 2018, in particular, Japan made use of ODA to advance cooperation with various countries with a view to maintaining and promoting a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific," and took the opportunities of the Japan-U.S. Summit Meeting in September and the

¹ For details on Japan's international cooperation, refer to "Japan's International Cooperation" of White Paper on Development Cooperation.

Japan-India Summit Meeting in October to present concrete examples of cooperation. With the vast demand for infrastructure that currently exists in the world, especially in Asia, it is vital to secure various elements including economic efficiency in view of life-cycle costs and debt sustainability of recipient countries which are included in the G7 Ise-Shima Principles for Promoting Quality Infrastructure Investment adopted at the G7 Ise-Shima Summit held in May 2016, as well as openness and transparency of infrastructure, and promote their international standardization. Japan will continue to contribute to the peace and prosperity of the international community while actively making use of ODA and developing quality infrastructure.

The revitalization of Japan's economy through the growth of developing countries and its growth alongside these countries is also an important issue for Japan's national interest. As described in the "Growth Strategy 2018" (revised in June 2018) and "Infrastructure Systems Export Strategy" (revised in June 2018), it is necessary to utilize ODA strategically in order to further promote the overseas expansion of Japanese companies.

Such efforts by Japan have won both high praise and trust from the international community. It is important that Japan continues and strengthens the efforts in the future so that Japan can lead the international community as a major responsible country in the world and ensure the international environment and order in line with Japan's national interests.

(2) The Current Status of ODA

A FY2018 Priority Policy for Development Cooperation

From the perspective of "Proactive Contribution to Peace" based on the principle of international cooperation, development cooperation is one of the most important tools toward further contributing to securing the peace, stability and prosperity of the international community,

and promoting Japan's diplomatic policies. With the aim of promoting strategic and effective development cooperation based on the Development Cooperation Charter, while also taking reference from diplomatic policies such as the promotion of a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific," the "Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)" and Japan's implementation guidelines for the SDGs, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) has positioned the following (items (A) to (C)) as priority issues for FY2018, and tackles these challenges while strengthening cooperation with various entities.

(A) Improving the environment and sharing fundamental values to achieve the peace, stability, and prosperity of the international community

Japan will engage in cooperation in fields such as strengthening maritime security capability and developing legal systems, in order to ensure the rule of law and freedom of navigation with a view to achieving a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific." Japan is committed to improving connectivity within and outside the region from the Pacific to the Indian Ocean, in order to secure stability and prosperity of the region as a whole. Japan contributes proactively to the realization of peace and stability in the international community including through peacebuilding, support for refugees, countermeasures against terrorism and violent extremism, while at the same time strengthening the collaboration between humanitarian assistance and development cooperation. Japan also works to ensure the safety of Japanese nationals working abroad, such as by offering cooperation to efforts by developing countries to improve counter-terrorism measures and the security environment.

(B) Addressing global challenges and promoting human security toward achieving the SDGs

Japan promotes cooperation with various countries toward achieving the SDGs, in ways

ranging from the formulation of national strategies and plans to the implementation of individual projects, in fields such as health, food, women (gender), education, disaster risk reduction and tsunami countermeasures, water and hygiene, and climate change and global environmental issues. In particular, Japan shares the experience it has built up as a developed country facing emerging challenges with the leaders of developing countries, thereby nurturing pro-Japanese groups of the future while making it possible to work together with various countries to address international issues with a more strategic approach.

(C) Contributing to economic diplomacy and regional revitalization with the aim of achieving “quality growth” alongside developing countries

Japan is involved in cooperative efforts toward the realization of “quality growth” in developing countries, and through that cooperation, Japan also contributes to the growth of Japan alongside with the developing countries, and to regional revitalization in Japan. In particular, Japan works to improve the business environment for foreign direct investment, and to support the overseas expansion of local governments and small and medium-sized enterprises, while at the same time further promoting the global expansion of “quality infrastructure,” including the promotion of “Japanese style” technology, systems, and knowhow that Japan has an edge in, such as energy-saving infrastructure, information and communications technology (ICT), and next-generation motor vehicles. Furthermore, Japan takes full advantage of human resources developed for industries in developing countries, as well as the networks that have been established through them.

In tackling priority issues (A) to (C) above, efforts are made to organically tie up the initiatives with bilateral cooperation and cooperation through international organizations. At the same time, Japan also promotes companies that

enhance Japan’s visibility, with the involvement of Japanese private corporations, local government bodies, universities and research institutes, and NGOs and civil society organizations (CSOs). In addition to putting effort into domestic publicity aimed at deepening understanding among the citizens toward supporting developing countries, through development cooperation, Japan also actively communicates information about Japan’s initiatives and promotes them to other countries. Japan is also engaged in efforts to strengthen measures to secure the safety of those involved in international cooperation projects.

B Safety Measures for Personnel Engaged in International Cooperation Projects

In the terrorist attacks that struck Dhaka, the capital of Bangladesh, in July 2016, seven Japanese engaged in ODA lost their lives while one Japanese was injured. The Government of Japan is determined to continue supporting developing countries, and to never give in to terrorism; however, the international terrorism situation is becoming increasingly severe. To ensure the safety of Japanese personnel engaged in international cooperation abroad, it is vital to establish a new system for ensuring utmost preparedness.

From the standpoint of such awareness, the Council on Safety Measures for International Cooperation Projects was established under MOFA. After five meetings with participation from many members from the relevant ministries and agencies, the Council published its final report at the end of August 2016, which sets forth new safety measures for personnel engaged in international cooperation projects. The final report covered the safety measures that should be taken in cooperation between MOFA and JICA, with the relevant parties, in accordance with the following five pillars: (1) Strengthening the collection, analysis, and sharing of threat information; (2) Code of conduct of partners and NGOs; (3) Physical/non-physical protective

measures, and strengthening training and drills; (4) Post-crisis response; and (5) Heightening crisis management awareness and improving the organizational structure of MOFA and JICA. Since then, these have been steadily implemented by MOFA and JICA.

As a responsible major power, Japan will continue to ensure the safety of personnel engaged in international cooperation projects, while contributing proactively to the peace, stability, and prosperity of the international community.

(3) Japan's Development Cooperation Performance and Approaches to Major Regions

A Japan's ODA Performance

In 2017, Japan provided approximately 18.46 billion US dollars in ODA², 9.8% more than the previous year on a gross disbursement basis. Japan ranks third among the member states of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for the Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD/DAC), following the U.S. and Germany. In terms of net disbursements generally used for international comparison, the amount was about 11.46 billion US dollars, up 10.0% from the previous year, and ranking fourth after the U.S., Germany, and the UK. The ODA/GNI ratio based on net disbursements was 0.23%, ranking 19th among member states of the DAC.

B Approaches to Major Regions

(A) Southeast Asia

The peace, stability, and prosperity in the Southeast Asian region are important to Japan, which has a close relationship with the region. Japan has helped resolve various development issues including poverty reduction, by promoting economic growth and human security in the region through development cooperation, and

contributed to the development of the region.

Approximately 59.7% of the total bilateral ODA of Japan went to the Asia region in 2017. A large portion of it comprised of support for Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Japan not only provides support toward efforts aimed at overcoming issues faced by ASEAN and further promoting integration, but also places a strong emphasis on support for the building of quality infrastructure and training of industrial human resources to strengthen regional connectivity and industrial foundation development. For example, following up from the "Industrial Human Resource Development Cooperation Initiative" that aims to train 40,000 industrial human resources in three years, including experienced technical experts, engineers, and human resources for research and development, as announced at the Japan-ASEAN Summit Meeting (Malaysia) held in November 2015, during the Japan-ASEAN Summit Meeting (Singapore) held in November 2018, Japan has announced a new plan to undertake human resource development for about 80,000 people in the next five years, including in the digital field such as AI, under the "Industrial Human Resource Development Cooperation Initiative 2.0." In order to contribute to the strengthening of ASEAN's unity and centrality through technical cooperation, Japan also took the opportunity of the Japan-ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting to confirm an agreement in principle on the Japan-ASEAN Technical Cooperation Agreement. Furthermore, for the purpose of establishing a free and open international order, Japan actively provides support for capacity building in the area of maritime law enforcement for Southeast Asian countries located along Japan's sea lanes, through such means as the provision of patrol vessels and equipment including coastal monitoring radar, and human resource development through the long-

² The main forms of ODA from Japan are: grant aid, namely, bilateral fund donations; loan aid for development in developing regions; technical cooperation; and donations or contributions to international organizations. Of these, loan aid for development accounts for the largest percentage. Loan aid for development is typically repaid with interest.

term dispatch of experts. From this perspective, Japan has been providing consistent support of 15 billion Japanese yen over two years through a comprehensive approach to improve security in the southern part of the Philippines and the Sulu-Celebes Seas, as announced at the East Asia Summit (EAS) held in the Philippines in November 2017. In addition, Japan is also providing consistent support to eradicate domestic and regional disparity, and support for the creation of a sustainable society in areas including disaster risk reduction, environment and climate change, and energy.

At the 10th Mekong-Japan Summit Meeting held in Tokyo in October 2018, Japan summarized the results of the New Tokyo Strategy 2015 and the Japan-Mekong Connectivity Initiative adopted at the Mekong-Japan Summit Meeting held three years ago, and announced its aim to further advance cooperation with the Mekong region in line with the Tokyo Strategy 2018, which sets out future guidelines for Japan-Mekong cooperation. By strengthening connectivity from three aspects: the hardware aspect that includes promoting “Quality Infrastructure,” the software aspect that includes cooperation in the digital field, and the industrial aspect that includes promoting investment and developing special economic zones, Japan aims to continue to contribute to the realization of “vibrant and effective connectivity” in the Mekong region.

(B) Southwest Asia

Southwest Asia holds strategic importance as a marine transportation hub that connects East Asia with the Middle East, and is also a region with countries that have immense economic potential, such as India. It is also increasingly drawing interest from Japanese companies as an export and investment destination. On the other hand, the region is still confronted by many unresolved issues such as undeveloped infrastructure and poverty. While also keeping in mind improving the investment environment for Japanese companies



Ceremony for signing and exchange of documents (October 29, Prime Minister's Office. Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

and human security, Japan provides a range of assistance through ODA to assist the region in overcoming these challenges.

With regard to India, on the occasion of Prime Minister Modi's visit to Japan in October 2018, notes concerning the provision of ODA loan were exchanged, related to seven projects including the construction of the Mumbai-Ahmedabad High Speed Rail, and the construction of a bridge in India's North Eastern Region. Prime Minister Modi expressed his gratitude for the ODA provided by Japan, while Prime Minister Abe expressed Japan's intentions to continue supporting India's efforts for social and industrial development, including through key quality infrastructure projects and capacity building.

With regard to Bangladesh, alongside with the deterioration of humanitarian conditions in camps for displaced persons from the northern part of the Rakhine state of Myanmar as a result of the large-scale influx of displaced persons over a short period of time, the situation has also had a severe impact on the living environment of the surrounding host communities. In response to this situation, Japan provided support through international organizations and NGOs in the areas of water and hygiene, health and medical care, education, and environmental conservation. Japan is also actively offering cooperation under the Bay of Bengal Industrial Growth Belt (BIG-B) initiative, in areas such as strengthening connectivity and improving the investment environment.

Column Wattay International Airport – Operation of International Flights

Completed the handover ceremony for a yen loan project for the expansion of an existing airport building
**Masaaki Takahashi, Port & Airport Department,
 Transportation & Urban Development Division, International Consulting Operations, Nippon Koei Co., Ltd.**



Construction area of this project (Construction area is shown with the red line, 2014) (Photo: Hazama Ando Corporation)

Japan concluded a yen loan contract worth 9.017 billion yen in 2014 for a project that addresses rapidly growing demand at the Vientiane Wattay International Airport in the capital city of Laos, and started expansion of the international passenger terminal building, construction of a new domestic passenger terminal building, and work on related facilities (parking lot, airport road, and guidance lights). The implementing agency was the Ministry of Public Works and Transport's Department of Civil Aviation (DCA). The project consultants were Nippon Koei Co.Ltd., Azusa Sekkei Co.Ltd. and Lao Consulting Group. Hazama Ando Corporation began construction work in December 2015. I performed project manager as a representative of the main

consulting firm. The core policy for the project was continuation of airport operations with a careful approach to enhance stakeholder's convenience, efficiency, and safety. In simple terms, a project manager's job is overall supervision and management of the project. During the peak phase in the second half of 2017, project work took place continuously day or night, 24-hour-a-day, and involved up to 1,200 people. Water leaked on the second-floor renovation and soaked some airline offices on the first floor directly below during renovation work on the existing building, calling into question the management responsibility of both the builder and consultants. Intensive workdays continued to ensure smooth construction. Besides having to make steadfast efforts to manage the project, one of my major tasks as the consulting project manager was to provide updates to high ranking officials. In 2018 alone, I provided a briefing on the construction to Foreign Minister Kono (April 7) and JICA Executive Senior Vice President Koshikawa (May 16), as well as State Minister for Foreign Affairs Nakane, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance Somdy, and Minister of Public Works and Transport Bounchanh at the handover ceremony on August 9. It was very rewarding to listen to comments and receive words of appreciation and encouragement from each official. I intend to continue contributing to gaining greater approval from customers and society, and help further expand our overseas airport business.



Site visit after the handover ceremony. Author giving an explanation to Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance Somdy (Photo: Hazama Ando Corporation)

Aiming for a world-class international airport.

Lao-Japan Airport Terminal Services Co., Ltd. (L-JATS), Vice President, Koshi Hayashi

L-JATS, which operates the international passenger terminal at Vientiane Wattay International Airport, located in the capital city of Laos, was established in 1999 as a joint venture between the Government of Laos and a Japanese company, and has been running the terminal building for about 20 years. This is the first privatization project of overseas airport terminal operation that a Japanese company has worked on. Furthermore, a basic agreement has been reached on extending the operation contract for ten years from March 2019 to March 2029. This airport expansion project is to address increasing demand from the steadily growing number of passengers at the airport. L-JATS aims to further enhance and expand facilities and improve passenger service in order to make this an excellent and pleasant international airport that can be a source of pride as the country's capital city airport.

Specifically, various works are scheduled to be implemented one by one through to next year, including large-scale renovation of restaurants, cafés, bars, and other related sites as well as duty-free shops, convenience stores, and gift shops, new construction of a lounge, and a new parking area to alleviate congestion in front of the terminal building. My sincere hope is that direct flights from Japan will begin service in the near future to provide more opportunities for many Japanese people to learn about the attractive tourism sites in Laos as soon as possible.

With regard to Sri Lanka, on the occasion of President Sirisena's visit to Japan in March, Prime Minister Abe announced that Japan will work to strengthen connectivity, enhance cooperation in the maritime sector, and put full effort into supporting Sri Lanka's growth through the development of "Quality Infrastructure" in areas such as ports, transportation, and energy, while at the same time providing support that is rooted in the lives of Sri Lanka's citizens. The two leaders also exchanged a note on the provision of ODA for the supply of advanced medical equipment.

(C) Central Asia and the Caucasus

The Central Asia and the Caucasus are geopolitically important areas surrounded by Russia, China, South Asia, the Middle East, and Europe. Their stability and development are important for all in the whole of Eurasia, including Japan. Japan supports the "open, stable, and independent" development of Central Asia and the Caucasus region, and upholds the ideal of Japanese diplomacy that contributes to peace and stability in the region and around the world. Japan supports nation building that allows fundamental values such as human rights, democracy, market economy, and the rule of law to take root for long-term stability and sustainable development in this region, while also taking into account broad-based views covering neighboring regions including Afghanistan and Pakistan.

In September when Foreign Minister Kono



Japan-Georgia Foreign Ministers' Meeting (September 4, Tbilisi, Georgia)

visited three countries in the Caucasus region (Armenia, Georgia, and Azerbaijan), he unveiled the "Caucasus Initiative" that emphasizes support for people-development with a view to nation building, and support for the development of an attractive Caucasus region through the development of infrastructure and the business environment. This initiative is based on the concept of promoting cooperation between Japan and the Caucasus, with the aim of realizing the independent growth of the Caucasus region that plays an important role as a gateway connecting Asia and Europe.

(D) Central and South America

Central and South America has enjoyed friendly relations with Japan for a long time and have deep historical ties with Japan, as demonstrated by the fact that about 2.1 million Japanese descendants, known as "Nikkei," reside in the region. The region is a major supplier of resources and food, as well as a potential new market with gross regional production exceeding 5 trillion US dollars. On the other hand, as many countries in the region are confronted by problems such as domestic income disparity and poverty in the agricultural and mountainous regions, Japan is engaged in various cooperative efforts while also taking into account the characteristics of each country in the Central and South America region. For example, Japan and Bolivia exchanged notes in August on the provision of Japanese grant aid toward road



Training on urban first aid and rescue techniques in the Disaster Risk Reduction Training Program for Latin America and the Caribbean (Chile. Photo: JICA)

development in the Okinawa settlement, with the aim of improving logistics in Bolivia which has a road paving rate of 8.5%. In September, Japan exchanged notes with Ecuador on a dollar-denominated loan to support projects such as the establishment of legal and institutional frameworks for expanding and strengthening national power transmission and distribution networks, and promoting energy conservation, through the Co-financing for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (CORE) program implemented jointly with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). Japan also exchanged notes with Suriname, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (in October) on the provision of a grant for fishery equipment to contribute to the sustainable development of the fisheries industry, and with Paraguay (in December) on the provision of a grant for medical equipment to improve health and medical services.

Central and South America is also highly vulnerable to natural disasters, and tackling these problems is a challenge. For example, Japan exchanged notes with Cuba and Haiti in February and October respectively to provide grant aids for made-in-Japan equipment related to the development of road, parks and infrastructure, with the aim of contributing to their recovery and reconstruction from the large-scale hurricane damage that the two countries have been faced with in recent years, as well as to improving their ability to cope with such disasters. As for Chile, Japan aims to undertake the development of human resources (target of 4,000 people) who can contribute to disaster risk reduction in Central and South America, through the KIZUNA Project (Disaster Risk Reduction Training Program for Latin America and the Caribbean) and based on the Japan-Chile Partnership Program (JCPP) 2030, a trilateral cooperation program for disaster risk reduction and other areas.

(E) The Middle East

Securing peace and stability in the Middle East and North Africa regions, which are key

geopolitical regions, is crucial not only for the energy security of Japan but also for the stability of the world. From these standpoints, Japan has steadily provided comprehensive support at a sum of about 6 billion US dollars to stabilize the Middle East, as it announced at the G7 Ise-Shima Summit in 2016, with a view to achieving peace and stability in the region.

With regard to Syria, where civil war has been ongoing, Foreign Minister Kono announced during the UN General Assembly in September the provision of support of about 10 million US dollars to strengthen the health sector, with the aim of helping to cope with the humanitarian crisis in Syria. Furthermore, Japan decided in December to provide humanitarian recovery support through the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). From 2017 to March 2019, 57 students have arrived in Japan for fostering human resources expected to contribute to the recovery of Syria in the future.

To support the stability of Jordan, which is accepting a large number of Syrian refugees, Prime Minister Abe took the opportunity of his visit to Jordan in May 2018 to announce support toward improving the health and hygiene environment of refugees and improving the waste disposal system. During the visit by King Abdullah II of Jordan to Japan in November, the two leaders agreed on the implementation of support for improving Jordan's fiscal situation.

Based on the Corridor for Peace and Prosperity



Children participating in classroom discussion at the Egypt-Japan school (Cairo, Egypt). Photo: JICA

initiative that is implemented through cooperation between Japan, Israel, Palestine, and Jordan with the aim of promoting economic and social development for Palestine, Japan is engaged in efforts to develop the Jericho Agro-Industrial Park (JAIP). The progress in these efforts were welcomed by the participants at a meeting of the Four-Party Consultative Unit hosted by Foreign Minister Kono in April 2018, Prime Minister Abe also visited JAIP in May and inspected the products of the companies in operation (See Special Feature “Japan’s Assistance for Palestine (JAIP, CEAPAD)”).

Human resource development is vital to realize stability in the Middle East in the medium- to long-term, and the “Kono Four Principles” which sets out Japan’s basic policy toward the Middle East, also highlights the importance of investing in people. In February 2018, Japan decided to provide an ODA loan for promoting the introduction of Japanese-style education in Egypt. Since September, new Egypt-Japan schools that adopt Japanese-style education have been opened, and such cooperation programs were also highly appraised by Foreign Minister Shoukry during his visit to Japan in October.

In Yemen, where the crisis is still ongoing, Japan is cooperating with international organizations to provide humanitarian support such as food aid. To support the reconstruction effort by Afghanistan, Japan is providing assistance to encourage the growth of a self-reliant economy and poverty reduction in the country. Attending the Geneva Conference on Afghanistan in November, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Sato introduced Japan’s assistance provided to Afghanistan in 2018 in the areas of health, agriculture, and irrigation. He also announced Japan’s decision to provide emergency grant aid of 13 million US dollars to help Afghanistan tackle drought.

(F) Africa

Africa has been gradually recovering from the economic depression caused by the rapid drop in

resource prices around 2014, and backed by its abundant natural resources and a rapidly growing population, continues to attract the attention and anticipation of the international community as a potential market. The Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) processes that Japan has been leading for a quarter of a century since 1993 further strengthen relations between Japan and Africa, and have been highly appraised by African countries. At TICAD VI held in August 2016, Japan announced that it will be investing a total of 30 billion US dollars jointly from the private and public sectors toward Africa’s future, in the following three priority areas: (1) diversification and industrialization of the economy; (2) promotion of resilient health systems; and (3) stabilization of society with a view to sharing prosperity. Based on this, Japan has been steadily providing support to Africa.

For example, from the perspective of investing in “Quality Infrastructure” for the diversification and industrialization of the economy, Japan provided support for the formulation of the West Africa Growth Ring Master Plan, a wider regional development strategy, which is one of the three priority regions announced at TICAD VI. In January 2018, a seminar bringing together the relevant countries and donors was held in Abidjan, Côte d’Ivoire. Furthermore, as a part of the concrete support provided to the region, Japan agreed on providing support for the repair of major arterial roads in Ghana during the visit by President Akufo-Addo to Japan in December, and on providing support to Côte d’Ivoire for traffic facilitation in Abidjan. Japan’s support for the West Africa Growth Ring and its importance were recognized in the Japan-Burkina Faso Joint Statement issued when President Kaboré of Burkina Faso visited Japan in November, and in the Japan-Ghana Joint Statement issued in December.

From the perspective of human resource development, Japan has also accepted more than 1,200 trainees to Japan through JICA under the

Addressing the Largest Postwar Humanitarian Crisis

- Efficient and effective assistance using data, advanced technologies, and development cooperation experience -

Currently, the number of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) has risen to the highest level since the Second World War at 68.5 million people. Humanitarian assistance needs are steadily growing. In this environment, Japan promotes efficient assistance that leverages data and advanced technologies and takes advantage of experience in development cooperation accumulated over many years to contribute to the stability and development of host regions.

Data is important for refugee assistance too! - Effective assistance to refugees and host countries based on a needs survey

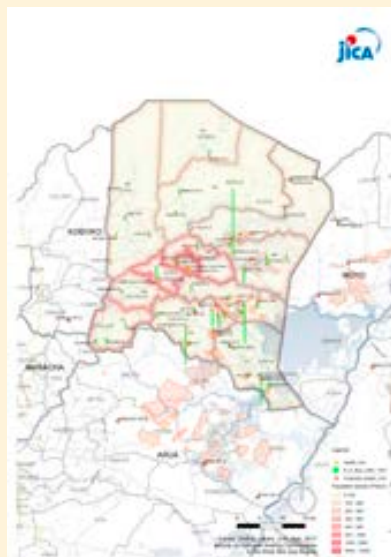
Toshinori Katsumata, Special Advisor, Office for Peacebuilding and Reconstruction, Infrastructure and Peacebuilding Department, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)

It has become even more important to learn and analyze challenges and needs in refugee-hosting countries and regions to alleviate burdens from rapidly increasing refugees and IDPs.

One example is JICA's data collection and a needs survey in a refugee-hosting region in the northern Uganda. JICA has started development assistance to northern Uganda since 2000s. In July 2017, in response to the massive influx of refugees from South Sudan (totaling about 800,000 people as of the end of 2018), JICA began a new survey to collect basic social infrastructure information of the region.

Based on the idea that medium and long-term development perspective needs to be incorporated into emergency humanitarian assistance for the region, JICA thoroughly surveyed social infrastructure in the region and identified the needs on the ground. Furthermore, by utilizing strong connections with local governments, ministries and agencies, JICA collected, analyzed, and integrated information on both refugees and host communities from various organizations in each region. Using such data, JICA developed integrated geographical information system (GIS) map and formulated a list of potential assistance projects.

JICA's survey results and map data were highly welcomed by the Ugandan government, local governments, international organizations, NGOs, and many development partners since it was virtually the first integrated data encompassing both refugees and host communities. Many parties in refugee-hosting areas have been utilizing the survey results and map data as basic information while collaborating and coordinating to support Uganda. Japan also considers a variety of initiatives and encourages the international community to tackle serious refugee issues as a whole, rather than leaving them to the concerned countries alone.



Map of health and medical facility locations in Yumbe District in northern Uganda. It helps identify facilities with strong assistance needs by combining location data on refugees with information of the local population and facility location (Photo: JICA)

Utilizing blockchain technologies to assist refugees - Application of cutting-edge technology on the frontline of humanitarian assistance

Naoe Yakiya, Director, World Food Programme (WFP) Japan Relations Office

The World Food Programme (WFP) provided about 7 billion US dollars in assistance to 90 million people struggling with starvation in over 80 countries in 2017 as the world's largest humanitarian assistance agency.

Food assistance is closely linked to international security concerns amid the growing number of people suffering from starvation around the world due to conflicts and climate change. WFP's assistance goes beyond just saving lives - various support projects such as support for school meals, and livelihood and disaster prevention assistance to promote self-resilient communities are being implemented in

cooperation with local governments, NGOs, and the private sector to save the futures of the affected countries.

Furthermore, with the aim of improving assistance, WFP launched an Research and Development (R&D) facility in Munich, Germany, to utilize innovative cutting-edge technologies in pursuit of completely eliminating starvation. The R&D facility calls for ideas widely from the WFP employees and the private sector.

Through this effort, WFP introduced a cash support platform that employs blockchain technologies* at a refugee camp in Jordan. The platform has reduced costs that had been previously incurred for bank transactions and enabled safe and highly transparent management of data on food purchases by refugees receiving assistance. Building on its success, in addition to the broad deployment of this technology, WFP continues its various initiatives, such as assisting market access by small farmers using an IT app, implementing R&D on agricultural products with high nutritional value that utilize hydroponic techniques, and improving the efficiency of assistance, utilizing a natural disaster early-warning system that uses a combination of AI and drones.



Syrian refugees using a cash support platform that employs blockchain technologies at a refugee camp in Jordan (Photo: WFP@Shaza Moghraby)

* Distributed ledger (database) technology enables the handling of important data transactions over the Internet and other open networks, which requires a high level of trust. Utilization of this technology makes it possible to prevent falsification and tampering without working through a third-party entity (intermediary), which incurs costs.

Enabling humanitarian assistance effectively utilizing experiences accumulated in development cooperation – Supplying safe water to displaced persons from Myanmar (DPFM)

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Following the deterioration of conditions in Rakhine State (Myanmar) in August 2017, more than 700,000 people fled into the southern part of the Cox's Bazar District in Bangladesh, resulting in increasing the total number of DPFM in the area to over a million including those who were already there.

Thousands of shallow wells were dug to meet rapidly increased demand for water due to this unprecedented influx of people into the DPFM camp. As they were dug without any advance planning on their locations, depth and so forth, this led to various problems such as groundwater depletion and contamination by E. coli.

To improve the situation, JICA utilized well-digging equipment provided as a grant aid project by the Government of Japan and dug a well with a depth of 400 meters at the camp site for securing safe water. It was also confirmed that this deep well could steadily supply safe water appropriate for drinking.

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) and Bangladesh's Department of Public Health Engineering, which handles rural water supply, have been working on the development of a water supply with a piped network. By around April 2019, it is expected to supply safe water to about 30,000 people.

Key factors that enabled the swift commencement of this significant project were as follows: quick implementation of local needs surveys by JICA experts involved in providing technical assistance to the Department of Public Health Engineering and its officials, arrangements for a site for digging by JICA expert dispatched to the country's Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief which is responsible for DPFM acceptance and repatriation, and continuous interaction as well as other collaboration between JICA and international organizations.

JICA will continue to support initiatives by the Government of Bangladesh for both DPFM and host communities in light of the expected protraction of displaced persons issues.



Deep-well drilling operation at the camp for displaced persons from Myanmar in Bangladesh (Photo: JICA)

assistance of the African Business Education Initiative for Youth (ABE initiative) since its launch in 2014 until 2018.

From the viewpoint of promoting a resilient health system, Japan decided in April 2018 to provide support to improve regional referral hospitals in Uganda. During the visit of President Lungu of Zambia to Japan in December, an agreement was concluded for Japan to provide support for the veterinary department of the University of Zambia.

As for social stabilization, Japan provided food aid, supplied security equipment, and provided support in cooperation with international organizations for large numbers of refugees and internally displaced people as a result of conflict and terrorism in the Sahel region, South Sudan, Somalia, and the surrounding countries. In addition, Japan decided to provide electoral support to Guinea-Bissau in cooperation with UNDP in December 2018.

Looking ahead to TICAD7 to be held in Yokohama in August 2019, a TICAD Ministerial Meeting was held in Tokyo in October 2018. Foreign Minister Kono, who served as co-chair of this meeting, affirmed the importance of providing assistance based on international standards such as debt sustainability. He also stated that Japan will strengthen connectivity through the development of “Quality Infrastructure” in order to achieve a “Free and Open Indo-Pacific” that connects Asia and Africa, and provide support for the transformation of Africa’s economic structure as set out in the African Union’s (AU) “Agenda 2063.”

(4) Approaches to Appropriate and Effective Implementation of ODA

A Approaches to Appropriate Implementation of ODA

In the implementation of ODA, efforts are made to enhance transparency by exchanging views with external experts at each phase and formulating

projects based on these discussions. In the phase of preliminary studies in the implementation of ODA, MOFA holds the Development Project Accountability Committee in public and decides whether studies should be implemented upon reviews and discussions conducted with external experts. Furthermore, after the implementation of the project, JICA publishes on its website the ex-post evaluation results for all projects valued at 200 million Japanese yen or more, while ex-post evaluations are also conducted by third parties for projects valued at 1 billion Japanese yen or more. With regard to grant aid projects implemented by MOFA, an ex-post evaluation system has also been introduced since FY2017. Internal ex-post evaluations are carried out for projects over 200 million Japanese yen or more, and the results of the evaluation are published, while third-party ex-post evaluations are conducted for projects over 1 billion Japanese yen or more. The matters pointed out in such ex-post evaluations are applied to the formulation of future ODA projects.

B Approaches to Effective Implementation of ODA

ODA is implemented through three frameworks corresponding to the needs of the partner country and the scale of the project: grant aid, loan aid, and technical cooperation. In order to utilize the limited budget efficiently and achieve a high level of development, MOFA and JICA take into account the needs of the partner country, establish priority areas of cooperation for each country, and formulate projects that contribute to these areas while going beyond the boundaries of each framework. For example, in Sri Lanka, seasonal torrential rains from the monsoon pose a serious problem causing landslides and the collapse of steep slopes particularly in mountainous and hilly regions. To resolve this problem, Japan provides support through Grant Aid for the development of a meteorological observation radar system, as well as support through ODA loans for construction works to shore up steep

slopes in major national highways that face a high risk of landslides. Japan has also provided support through technical cooperation, aimed at improving design and construction management capability in Sri Lanka in the area of construction works to counter landslide disasters. At the Japan-Sri Lanka Summit Meeting held in March 2018, Japan announced that it will provide technical cooperation with Sri Lanka to further improve its capability to implement measures for countering landslides, such as the building of early warning systems for landslide disasters.

C Efforts with regard to International Discussions on ODA

Japan also contributes actively to international discussions on ODA. The Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the OECD is advancing efforts to modernize ODA based on an agreement concluded at the High-Level Meeting held in 2014. This includes changing the ODA accounting rules for ODA loans, formulating ODA accounting rules for expenses related to migrants and refugees as well as peacekeeping and peacebuilding activities, and efforts to promote the mobilization of private-sector funds. Japan also strives to ensure that ODA programs are aligned with the modern times, and that efforts by donors are reflected accurately. In addition, Japan has been serving on the Steering Committee of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (GPEDC) since September 2015. The GPEDC serves as a framework that various entities participate in with the aim of improving the effectiveness of development cooperation. These entities are not limited to the governments of various countries, but also include civil society, the private sector and so on. Japan has also been introducing its initiatives in areas such as investment in quality infrastructure and triangular cooperation at the GPEDC.

D Efforts toward Promotion of Information Disclosure and Improvement Development of Cooperation Quality

The understanding and support from Japanese citizens is essential for the implementation of development cooperation. Therefore, efforts are made for effective communication and higher quality of development cooperation to enhance their understanding of ODA. Various PR events took place aiming to reach out to a wide range of people. Specifically, these included publicity through participatory type events such as “Global Festa Japan 2018” (September 29), Japan’s largest



Global Festa Japan 2018 (September, Tokyo)



“Go! ODA-Man”



Goodwill Ambassador for KUSANONE, Penalty (October, Tokyo. Photo: Yoshimoto Kogyo)

event for international cooperation, in Odaiba, Tokyo, and “One World Festival” (February) in Osaka City, as well as the production of a short anime program “Go! ODA-Man” based on the popular anime “Eagle Talon.” This animated film simply introduces Japan’s ODA projects around the world such as maritime security projects in ASEAN and education support projects in Kenya. The film was also broadcasted on the Tokyo Metro’s train channel and BS TV to reach a wide audience. Publicity activities were also implemented with the comedy duo “Penalty” serving as Goodwill Ambassadors to publicize the 30th anniversary of the Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects (KUSANONE). Also, efforts are continuously made to deliver information on development cooperation through the ODA website.

Furthermore, based on the Development Cooperation Charter, which declares enhanced efforts for overseas publicity, Japan plans tours to its development cooperation project sites for the local media so that they will also cover Japan’s cooperation, and issues PR pamphlets in English and local languages.

In order to improve the quality of ODA, it is necessary to feed recommendations and lessons-learned from the evaluation of the implementation status and effectiveness of ODA back to the decision-making and program/project implementation. MOFA mainly conducts policy and program evaluations by external experts, and the results are shared and used by stakeholders. At the same time, the evaluation results are published on MOFA’s website in order to fulfill the accountability to the public. From the viewpoint of improving transparency of the JICA’s projects, JICA publicizes the current status and achievements of each project on its “ODA Mieruka Site” (a website for the visualization of ODA). As of the end of December 2018, a total of 4,322 projects are listed on this site.

2 Response to Global Issues

(1) 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

The “2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (the 2030 Agenda)” is a set of international development goals to be achieved by 2030, which was adopted by the UN Summit in September 2015 as a successor to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) formulated in 2001. The 2030 Agenda sets out the international development goal of realizing a society that is sustainable, diverse, and inclusive, and where “no one is left behind,” by 2030.

The 2030 Agenda lists the “Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)” consisting of 17 goals and 169 targets that are interrelated and closely linked to each other, and which serve as development goals for the whole of the international community including developed countries.

Japan has consistently and proactively contributed to discussions and negotiations for the 2030 Agenda even before full-fledged discussions got underway in the international community. After the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, Japan first built a foundation for the implementation of the SDGs by establishing the SDGs Promotion Headquarters headed by the Prime Minister and composed of all cabinet ministers as members, formulating the SDGs Implementation Guiding Principles to serve as Japan’s guidelines in the implementation of the SDGs, and establishing eight priority areas that Japan will place particular focus on. Furthermore, Japan puts great importance on public-private partnership for the implementation of the SDGs, and has to date held six Round Table Meetings on the promotion of the SDGs, bringing together stakeholders from a wide range of fields including NGOs, academia, the private sector, and international organizations. It also engages in the exchange of views on initiatives by local governments and businesses toward the promotion of the SDGs, measures

**Special
Feature****Learn More About Japan's ODA Activities that Contribute to the World!
"Go! ODA-Man"**

Foreign Minister Kono commissioned "Yoshida-kun," the main character in the Eagle Talon animated series, as ODA-Man to represent the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in September 2018 and help raise awareness of ODA among the Japanese people. This led to the creation of "Go! ODA-Man" a series of animated videos that are full of jokes introducing Japan's ODA activities that contribute to the world.



Not many opportunities are available for the people of Japan to learn about Japan's ODA activities, which mainly assist the advancement of developing countries through local projects. That is why many people seem to feel that they are not clear as to what ODA is all about, despite having heard about the term, even if they do know not to pronounce it "Oda (a common Japanese family name)." Some might wonder whether it is necessary to use Japanese Government funds, in other words taxpayer money, to assist other countries.

Actually, Japan was also a recipient of ODA activities in the past. Japan's important infrastructure that still supports its society, such as the Tokaido Shinkansen, highways in the Tokyo metropolitan area, and Kurobe Dam in Toyama Prefecture, was built using ODA funds from overseas after the Second World War. Japan recovered at an unprecedented pace while receiving such assistance and, from 1954, switched to the side of helping other countries through the provision of ODA and started contributing to global peace and stability.

The world is likely to become more peaceful if countries around the world become prosperous and everyone can lead healthy and better lives. Everything is linked globally. Japan's peace and prosperity are only possible with global peace and prosperity. Answering calls for Japanese assistance from around the world also raises trust in Japan and boosts the country's presence globally. ODA helps developing countries and at the same time also benefits Japan!

Of course, no matter how enthusiastic this explanation may be, this, in and of itself, will not foster a full understanding of ODA. "ODA-Man" was born to help provide a clear explanation of the meaning, purpose, and importance of ODA, which uses precious tax payer money, and facilitate greater understanding of ODA among the Japanese people. The "Go! ODA-Man" video series introducing Japan's ODA activities in Asian countries, Kenya, and other countries around the world aired on Tokyo Metro's train channel and Japanese satellite broadcasting in September and October 2018. A manga version of it has been distributed on the LINE app too. In addition, a costumed ODA-Man is also actively involved in this initiative, making appearances at various events.



ODA-Man appearance at Global Festival JAPAN 2018, an international cooperation event, together with FROGMAN, the author of ODA-Man and a voice actor (September 29, Tokyo)

Please give your support to ODA-Man as he continues his efforts to deepen interest in and understanding of ODA among Japanese people!

Videos and manga of "Go! ODA-Man"* are available for viewing on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs website! (*Japanese version only)



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS
世界を変えるための17の目標



Logos of all 17 goals under the SDGs (Source: UN Information Center)



The sixth meeting of the SDGs Promotion Headquarters (December 21, Tokyo; Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

Chapter 3

for the empowerment of women and the next generation, and strengthening cooperation with the international community.

To date, six meetings of the SDGs Promotion Headquarters have been held. At the sixth meeting held in December 2018, the Expanded SDGs Action Plan 2019 was unveiled, covering the main initiatives to be undertaken by MOFA as well as other relevant government ministries toward the achievement of the SDGs. This Action Plan established three pillars for Japan's SDGs initiatives: (1) the promotion of Society 5.0 that is tied in with the SDGs and achieved through efforts by the public and private sectors; (2) regional revitalization driven by the SDGs; and, (3) empowerment of the next generation and women as the future leaders who will take up the role to realize the SDGs. In line with these, efforts will be further advanced toward the achievement of the SDGs, in both the aspects of domestic implementation and international cooperation.

This Action Plan also clearly sets out Japan's contribution to the building of a resilient and environmentally-friendly nation and to "human resource development" in the world based on the notion of human security, as well as the main SDGs themes that Japan will exert its leadership for in the international community as the chair of the G20 in 2019.

On the same day as the sixth meeting of the SDGs Promotion Headquarters, the conferment ceremony for the second Japan SDGs Award was held to commend companies and organizations that have put in place excellent initiatives toward the realization of the SDGs. This year, the Japan Food Ecology Center, Inc. received the SDGs Promotion Headquarters Chief (Prime Minister's) Award for its efforts toward the effective utilization of food waste.

Through opportunities such as TICAD7 and the G20 Osaka Summit in 2019, which has put the world's attention on Japan, Japan is exerting its leadership and presenting to the international community its stance as a strong leader in the promotion of the SDGs. Japan will further promote and strengthen its concrete initiatives, in order to present its achievements as the G20 chair at the SDG Summit scheduled for September 2019.

To achieve the SDGs by 2030, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) estimates that it is necessary to overcome a funding gap of as much as approximately 2.5 trillion US dollars (approximately 280 trillion yen) every year. To contribute to revitalizing discussions about innovative financing mechanisms, including an international solidarity tax, so as to overcome this funding gap, Japan assumed position as the chair of the Leading Group on Innovative Financing for Development in January 2019, a group that is made up of voluntary countries and organizations.

A Human Security

Human security is a concept aiming at creating a community in which people can fully develop their potential through protecting all individuals,

and at the same time empowering them to solve their own problems. Japan identifies human security as one of its diplomatic pillars, and has positioned it as a guiding principle that lies at the roots of Japan's development cooperation in the Development Cooperation Charter approved in 2015. To date, Japan has led discussions in the United Nations and other fora, and supported the dissemination and implementation of human security by UN organizations through the contribution of a cumulative total of about 46.8 billion yen to the UN Human Security Trust Fund established in 1999 by Japan's initiative. In the area of bilateral cooperation, Japan has also put effort into the dissemination and implementation of this concept through support for Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects. The 2030 Agenda is also based on principles such as "people-centered" and "leave no one behind," and its core reflects the concept of human security.

B Approaches in the Area of Disaster Risk Reduction

200 million people around the world are affected by disasters every year (90% of the victims are citizens of developing countries) and the annual average loss incurred by natural hazards extends to 250 to 300 billion US dollars. Disaster risk reduction is essential for realizing poverty eradication and sustainable development.

Japan makes use of the knowledge of disaster risk reduction and mitigation, built up through its numerous experiences with disasters, to promote international cooperation. At the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction held in Sendai in March 2015, Japan took the lead in the adoption of the "Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030," a guideline for efforts by the international community. Japan announced the "Sendai Cooperation Initiative for Disaster Risk Reduction" which includes provision of 4 billion US dollars toward cooperation and training of 40,000 people in the four years from 2015 to 2018.

Coinciding with World Tsunami Awareness Day (November 5), proposed by Japan and enacted unanimously at the 70th UN General Assembly held in December 2015, Japan has been hosting the High School Students Summit on "World Tsunami Awareness Day" since 2016. Held three times to date, high school students from countries around the world are invited to this event, and through practical learning about Japan's history of tsunami, recovery from earthquake disasters, and preparations for the Nankai Trough earthquake, the participants make proposals for future challenges and implementation in their home countries.

The first High School Students Summit on "World Tsunami Awareness Day" was held in Kuroshio Town, Kochi Prefecture on November 25 and 26, 2016, and the second one was held in Ginowan City, Okinawa Prefecture, on November 7 and 8, 2017. The third event was held in Wakayama City, Wakayama Prefecture, on October 31 and November 1, 2018, and was attended by about 380 high school students from 48 countries including Japan. Japan will continue to share the experiences and lessons drawn from past disasters with the world, and to promote the "mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction" that incorporates the perspectives of disaster risk reduction in the policies of every country.

C Approaches in the Area of Education

In the area of education, Japan announced "Learning Strategy for Peace and Growth," a new strategy for Japan's international cooperation on education, in line with the timing for the adoption of the "2030 Agenda" in September 2015. This strategy specifies "educational cooperation to achieve inclusive, equitable and quality learning," "educational cooperation for industrial, science and technology human resource development and sustainable socio-economic development," and "establishment and expansion of global and regional networks for educational cooperation" as guiding principles. Based on these guiding

principles, Japan is providing various forms of educational support in countries around the world. It is also an active participant in education support-related fora including the Global Partnership for Education (GPE). At the G7 Charlevoix Summit held in June 2018, Japan announced that it will be providing 200 million US dollars in support for human resource development and quality education for girls and women in developing countries.

D Approaches in Agricultural Areas

In coordination with the relevant countries, such as G7 or G20 member states and international organizations, Japan has delivered assistance for agriculture and rural development in developing countries. In April 2016, Japan hosted the G7 Niigata Agriculture Ministers' Meeting. At this Meeting, the "Niigata Declaration," which seeks to strengthen global food security, was adopted and issued with the aim of addressing new challenges in the agricultural sector such as increase in food demand and abnormal weather conditions. At the G7 Ise-Shima Summit held in May the same year, the G7 Vision for Action on Food Security and Nutrition was unveiled.



Japan's Project for Supporting Rice Industry Development in Tanzania "TANRICE"/Inspection of the local site by State Minister for Foreign Affairs Sato (August 2, Kilimanjaro, Tanzania)

E Approaches in the Area of Water

Japan has continuously been the largest supporting country in the area of water since the 1990s and has implemented high quality assistance utilizing Japan's experiences, expertise, and technologies. Japan proactively participates in discussions in the international community, and tackles global issues in the area of water based on its contributions to date.

(2) Global Health

Overcoming health issues that threaten lives and hinder all kinds of social, cultural and economic activities is a common global challenge directly linked to human security. Japan advocates human security, as a foundation of the "Proactive Contribution to Peace," and has acted in support of that principle. Japan regards health as a central element of human security. Japan has become a society of the most healthy and active ageing and is further expected to play a proactive role in the area of health. Japan aims to realize an international community that improves people's health as well as ensures the right to health through assistance in the area of global health.

Under this principle, Japan has achieved remarkable results in overcoming health issues such as infectious diseases, maternal and child health, and nutrition improvements through cooperation with a number of countries and various international organizations, including the World Health Organization (WHO), the World Bank, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (the Global Fund), Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance (Gavi), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the Global Health Innovative Technology Fund (GHIT).

Japan demonstrated leadership and took the lead in international discussions based on the "Basic Design for Peace and Health," a theme-based policy for the Development Cooperation Charter formulated in 2015, and bearing in mind

the achievement of Universal Health Coverage (UHC) that ensures the provision of basic health services throughout a life for everyone.

Leaders and ministers of various countries as well as heads of international organizations participated in the UN General Assembly High-Level Meeting on Ending TB in September, and affirmed the political commitment to promoting measures for achieving the target set out in SDG 3, Target 3.3 (target for infectious diseases, etc.) to end tuberculosis by 2030. The political statement was approved at the opening ceremony, clearly setting out efforts to strengthen measures to end tuberculosis, secure funds for these measures, strengthen research and development, and strengthen frameworks to verify progress. Minister of Health, Labor and Welfare Kato, who participated in this meeting, introduced Japan's long track record in engaging in international technical cooperation in tackling tuberculosis as well as providing financing support to international organizations, and expressed Japan's intentions to continue contributing in this area going forward.

(3) Labor and Employment

It is important to raise income levels through employment, in order to raise the living standards of those living in poverty. Against the background of an expanding supply-chain worldwide, it is necessary to put effort into developing the labor environment, and to realize “decent work” (work that is of an acceptable quality for motivated human beings) around the world. The realization of “decent work” has been positioned as a primary objective of the activities of the International Labor Organization (ILO), which marks its centenary year in 2019.

In view of this, Japan is also engaged in development cooperation in the field of labor. In 2018, Japan offered technical cooperation to developing countries in the Asia Pacific region, including support for the urgent creation of employment in the aftermath of a natural disaster,

the development of labor laws, and improvement of enforcement systems for labor, health and safety, by making voluntary contributions to the ILO and providing support to networks of international labor organizations.

In June, the first Japan-ILO Annual Strategic Consultation Meeting (Geneva, Switzerland) was held. During this meeting, Japan and the ILO affirmed the following three key points, among other matters: (1) further strengthening cooperation on the “Future of Work” initiative; (2) Japan's financial and human resource contributions to supporting development cooperation in the labor sector to date, and further strengthening of the partnership; and (3) taking concrete, joint action toward further increasing the number of Japanese staff in the ILO.

(4) Environmental Issues and Climate Change

A Global Environmental Issues

There is growing awareness internationally of the importance of efforts to address the global environmental issues. For example, the 2030 Agenda sets out goals for the environmental sector. Japan is fully engaged in conserving the natural environment and realizing sustainable development, through its active participation in negotiations and encouragement of other parties in international organizations concerning multilateral environmental treaties and environmental matters.

(A) Conservation of the Marine Environment

The problem of marine plastic litter is a pressing issue that has a potential impact on marine ecology, tourism, fisheries, and human health. In recent years, it has become increasingly important to address this issue. At the G7 Charlevoix Summit held in June, Prime Minister Abe spoke about the need to tackle this issue as a challenge to the entire world, including developing countries, as well as the vital need to spread countermeasures such as 3Rs (reduce, reuse, recycle) and capacity

building for waste disposal internationally. He also declared that Japan will address this issue at the G20 Osaka Summit in 2019.

Furthermore, at the ASEAN Plus 3 (Japan, China, and the Republic of Korea) Summit held in November, Prime Minister Abe advocated the “ASEAN+3 Marine Plastics Debris Cooperative Action Initiative,” which was welcomed by all the countries. Under this initiative, Japan, in cooperation with China and the ROK, will provide support for measures against marine plastics debris undertaken by ASEAN countries. This support will take the form of capacity building and infrastructural development related to 3Rs and waste disposal, and support for the development of action plans by individual countries. At the Japan-ASEAN Summit held in November, Prime Minister Abe also announced the expansion of support for ASEAN countries toward tackling the problem of marine plastics litter.

From the perspective of contributing to the realization of the SDGs, the High-Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy was established under the leadership of Norway to engage in discussion about the conservation of the marine environment, the fishery industry, and the utilization of marine resources, among other topics. The leaders of 12 maritime nations, including Prime Minister Abe, are participating in this Panel. In September, the first meeting of this Panel was held in New York, U.S. In the message that Prime Minister Abe delivered at this conference, he pointed out the importance of tackling the issue of marine plastic litter, responding to the impact of climate change on the oceans, and putting in place measures to counter illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing.

In October, the 23rd Northwest Pacific Action Plan (NOWPAP) Intergovernmental Meeting was held in Moscow, Russia. The NOWPAP framework is a cooperative framework for the conservation of the marine environment of the Sea of Japan and the Yellow Sea, and involves Japan, China, the ROK, and Russia. During the

meeting, a discussion was held on matters such as the evaluation framework for the medium-term strategy from 2018 to 2023, and NOWPAP's contribution toward the achievement of SDG 14 (Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources).

(B) Conservation of Biodiversity

In recent years, illegal trade of wildlife, including elephants and rhinoceros, is becoming an increasingly severe issue. It is also drawing the attention of the international community as one of the sources of funding for international terrorist organizations. State Minister for Foreign Affairs Abe attended the fourth International Conference on Illegal Wildlife Trade held in London, UK, in October, and introduced Japan's proactive efforts in tackling the illegal trade of ivory, which the international community has shown particular concern for. Specifically, Japan tightened its regulations on the domestic ivory transactions in June, and announced that it will continue to enforce stringent management of domestic ivory transactions at a level on par with major countries. It was also announced that Japan promotes support for anti-poaching measures of elephants in range countries.

In conjunction with the 13th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands (COP13) in October, which addressed the importance of conserving wetlands against pressures of urbanization and climate change, Japan designated two new wetlands under the Convention at Shizugawa Bay in Miyagi Prefecture and Kasai Beach Park in Tokyo.

In November, the 54th Session of the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) Council was held in Yokohama, to promote sustainable forest management.

In November, the 14th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP14) was held in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt. During the meeting, it was

decided that an open-ended working group and regional workshops will be convened as a part of the process toward the review of global goals on biodiversity after 2020, scheduled to be adopted at COP15 in 2020. In addition, discussions were held on a wide range of topics including digital sequence information on genetic resources and synthetic biology.

(C) International Management of Hazardous Chemicals / Hazardous Waste

In November, the 30th Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, was held in Quito, Ecuador. At the meeting, discussions were held on the related matters including the implementation of the amended Protocol that added hydrofluorocarbons (HFC) to the list of controlled substances, which would enter into force on January 1, 2019. In December, the Government of Japan deposited the Instrument of Acceptance of the amended Protocol with the United Nations, thus became a party to the amended protocol at the time of its entry into force.

In November, the second meeting of the Conference of the Parties for the Minamata Convention on Mercury was held in Geneva, Switzerland. Japan, as a member of the Bureau responsible for the management of the Convention representing the Asia and Pacific Region, contributed to the smooth implementation of the meeting, and was actively engaged in the international rule-making on mercury management including by submitting three draft resolutions together with EU and the U.S.

B Climate Change

(A) The Paris Agreement, and the 24th Session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP24)

Global efforts are essential in reducing

greenhouse gas emissions that cause climate change; however, the Kyoto Protocol adopted at the third session of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP3) in 1997 required only developed countries to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The Paris Agreement was adopted at COP21 held in Paris in December 2015. The Paris Agreement is a fair and effective framework that provides that parties communicate their nationally determined contributions to greenhouse gas emission reductions and undertake efforts toward the achievement of such goals regardless of whether they are developed or developing countries. The Agreement entered into force in November 2016, and has been ratified by more than 180 countries including Japan (as of December 2018). In June 2017, the U.S. announced its intention to withdraw from the Paris Agreement, but it has continued to participate in climate change negotiations at COPs and other fora.

Upon the adoption of the Paris Agreement, negotiations commenced on the implementation guidelines of the Agreement toward its full implementation after 2020. The implementation guidelines of the Paris Agreement were adopted at COP24 held in Katowice, Poland, in December 2018 based on discussions on each agenda item such as mitigation, adaptation, transparency frameworks, market mechanisms, and finance. Japan actively participated in the negotiations for each item, and contributed to the establishment of common rules for all countries in line with the spirit of the Paris Agreement. At COP24, the Talanoa Dialogue³ was held as a ministerial-level discussion to stocktake the status of efforts in reducing greenhouse gas emissions worldwide while aiming to enhance ambitions. Minister of Environment Harada participated as Japan's representative, and actively introduced Japan's technology as well as its track records in international cooperation.

³ "Talanoa" is a Fijian word (Fiji is the chair of COP23) meaning comprehensive, participatory, and transparent dialogue process.

(B) Efforts in Supporting Developing Countries

Developed countries including Japan have provided various supports for developing countries so that those countries can implement sufficient climate change measures. Those supports include financial cooperation, capacity building, and technology transfer. From such perspectives, the Green Climate Fund (GCF) also plays an important role as a multilateral fund that provides support to developing countries for greenhouse gas emission reductions and adapting to the impact of climate change. Japan has contributed funds based on the Act on Contribution to the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and the Accompanying Measures enacted in 2015, has sat on the board to the GCF, and has participated actively in its management including the selection of support projects. By December 2018, the GCF Board has approved 93 support projects.

(C) Joint Crediting Mechanism (JCM)

The JCM is a mechanism for contributing to worldwide global warming measures, by quantifying contributions of Japan to GHG emission reductions or removals, and using them to achieve Japan's own emission reduction targets, through the application of its excellent low carbon technologies, as well as the implementation of measures in developing countries. As of December 2018, Japan has established the JCM with 17 partner countries, and implemented more than 120 projects related to the reduction or removal of greenhouse gases. In 2018, the initiative has steadily produced results, such as through the issuance of credits from projects in Mongolia, Viet Nam, Palau, Indonesia, and Thailand.

(D) Japan's efforts in Climate Change and Fragility Risk

The view that climate change can have an impact on the stability of economies and societies in each country has been growing increasingly prevalent in recent years, alongside with growing interest in its impact on security such as conflicts

and peacebuilding. Discussions have also been held at fora including the G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting process, on the theme of climate change and fragility. As a part of its initiatives on the fragility risk of climate change, Japan held the International Conference on Climate Change and Fragility in the Asia-Pacific Region in July 2018 in Tokyo, where it shared with participants the trends in international discussions on climate change and security as well as business, and deepened discussions on the fragility to climate change in the Asia Pacific region, crisis management by implementing corporations, impact on investment, and approaches that should be taken by governments, local governments, and corporations toward risks that could arise in the future.

(E) Climate Change Measures by Non-State Actors

Measures by non-state actors such as private corporations, local governments, and NGOs are also important in tackling climate change, in addition to actions taken by national governments. This importance has also been raised in past COP decisions. In Japan as well, corporations have made further progress in their efforts, as demonstrated by keen activities of the Japan Climate Leaders' Partnership (Japan-CLP), a corporate group that aims to take proactive action in the area of climate change, as well as the increase in the number of Japanese corporations participating in the international initiative "RE100," whose member corporations have established the goal of procuring 100% renewable energy for the electricity required in the operation of their businesses. Backed by this heightened momentum in Japan, climate change initiatives in Japan are showing further progress, such as with the launch of Japan Climate Initiative (JCI) in July, a network of non-state actors that aims to realize decarbonization. Japan aims to advance climate change diplomacy in cooperation with such initiatives by non-state actors.

Column

Launch of the Japan Climate Initiative (JCI)! – Communicating the activities of Japanese companies, local governments, and NGOs worldwide

Teruyuki Ohno, Japan Climate Initiative Secretariat, Executive Director,
Renewable Energy Institute

Since the establishment of the Paris Agreement in 2015, growing attention has been paid to “non-state actors,” diverse agents besides nations that can work to realize a decarbonized society, including companies, local governments, and NGOs. This is because these actors have a decisively important role to play toward attaining the ambitious goal of effectively zero emissions of greenhouse gases by the middle of this century, given their central presence in actual economic activities and people’s daily lives.

On July 6, 2018, Japan Climate Initiative, a network organization for these non-state actors, was established. At the time of its establishment, there were 105 participating entities, including major Japanese companies, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) who underpin regional economies, various local government organizations from large cities to rural areas, consumer groups, and environmental NGOs. Membership has steadily risen since then and already more than tripled by the end of 2018.

The requirement for a JCI membership is to accept the founding declaration to “Join the front line of the global trend for decarbonization from Japan.” The declaration states that members will strengthen their efforts to “demonstrate global leadership in achieving the well-below-two-degree target through our own activities,” and enhance Japan’s commitment to climate efforts in the international community.

JCI held its first domestic event, “Japan Climate Action Summit,” on October 12, 2018. Many key people on the front line of climate change measures, such as corporate executive officers and top local government officials, engaged in enthusiastic discussions about bolstering future activities. The Summit also included a Top Leaders Session with corporate top executives and local government heads, and more than 700 attendees from around Japan were able to experience the vibrant atmosphere for themselves.

Communicating the activities of Japan’s non-state actors to the world is one of JCI’s important missions. Many JCI members participated in the Global Climate Action Summit (GCAS) held in San Francisco in the U.S. in September and COP24 in Poland in December, and introduced activities by Japanese companies and local governments in presentations at various events during these conferences.

Following Japan’s example, non-state actors in other countries, such as Mexico and Argentina, have formed their own networks as well. Meanwhile, the U.S. has the “We Are Still In” network that promotes measures for tackling climate change, against the Trump administration’s intention to withdraw from the Paris Agreement. In 2019, Japan is hosting the G20 Summit, which will turn the world’s attention to Japan. JCI aims to collaborate with such networks in various countries and strengthen initiatives for realizing decarbonized societies in Japan and worldwide.



JCI founding press conference (July 6; Photo: JCI)



Japan Climate Action Summit (October 12; Photo: JCI)

(5) Arctic and Antarctic

A Arctic**(A) Current State of the Arctic, and Japan's Arctic Policy**

There is a risk that rapid changes in the Arctic environment caused by global warming will have a drastic and irreversible impact on the ecology and the lives of those living in the Arctic, including indigenous peoples. At the same time, as the decreasing amount of sea ice has expanded the navigable area, there have been growing economic opportunities such as the use of the Northern Sea Route and the development of resources.

Japan's Arctic policy is based upon "Japan's Arctic Policy," approved by the Headquarters for Ocean Policy in 2015. The Third Basic Plan on Ocean Policy, adopted by the Cabinet in May 2018, established a specific section on the Arctic Policy for the first time and positioned it as one of the main measures in Japan's ocean policy.

(B) Japan's International Activities on the Arctic

In October, Foreign Minister Kono attended the Arctic Circle⁴ for the first time as the Foreign Minister of Japan, and delivered a keynote speech on Japan's Arctic Policy at the meeting.

Japan's Ambassador in charge of Arctic Affairs attended the Senior Arctic Official meetings of the Arctic Council (AC), and the international conferences on the Arctic organized by Finland, Norway, Poland, China, and the Republic of Korea, and presented Japan's engagements and thoughts over the Arctic. Furthermore, he held consultations with relevant countries, including bilateral Arctic consultations with Denmark and the EU. The third Trilateral High-Level Dialogue on the Arctic among Japan, China and the ROK was held in June in Shanghai. The dialogue was



Keynote speech by Foreign Minister Kono at the Arctic Circle (October 19, Reykjavik, Iceland)

launched at the Sixth Japan-China-ROK Trilateral Summit held in 2015. In this meeting the Joint Statement reaffirming the importance of promoting trilateral Arctic cooperation (particularly in the field of scientific research) was adopted. Japan also participates actively in establishment of international rules on the Arctic. One good example is the Agreement to Prevent Unregulated High Seas Fisheries in the Central Arctic Ocean, signed by nine countries and one organization including Japan in October 2018.

Furthermore, Japan promotes international cooperation on the Arctic with the relevant countries including the Arctic countries. Through the Arctic Challenge for Sustainability (ArCS) project launched in FY2015, Japan promotes international cooperation for research and human resource development at research and observation stations in the U.S., Canada, Russia, Norway, and Greenland (Denmark). Japan also sent its researchers to the AC working groups specialized in specific themes, where they present outcomes of their research on the Arctic and contribute to discussions.

In the area of economic use, Japan encourages more Japanese companies to pay attention to Arctic business in order to take advantage of the Northern Sea Route. As demonstrated by the

⁴ Established by former Iceland President Grimsson and others in 2013, this international conference is attended by about 2,000 participants including government representatives, researchers, and business people. It is the Arctic version of the Davos Summit. Japan has been participating since the first conference with the attendance of the Ambassador in charge of Arctic Affairs and other delegates. In addition to presenting speeches at the plenary session, Japanese researchers also presented the outcomes of their scientific research at the breakout session.

**Special
Feature****Foreign Minister Kono's Attendance at the Arctic Circle 2018
– Japan's initiatives for realizing an "Ideal Arctic"**

The Arctic Circle is an international meeting founded by former Iceland President Grímsson and other leaders in 2013, attended by government officials, researchers, business people, and others. In October 2018, Foreign Minister Kono attended the Arctic Circle for the first time as the Foreign Minister of Japan, and delivered a keynote speech on Japan's Arctic policy.

In the speech, Foreign Minister Kono emphasized the particular importance of clarifying the mechanism of environmental changes in the Arctic and understanding its impact in order for the international community to appropriately address the Arctic "issue" of adverse impact on the ecosystem, while also recognizing the "opportunities" emerging in the Arctic, such as development of natural resources. Furthermore, he proposed the idea of an "Ideal Arctic" for the international community that consists of (1) clarifying the mechanism of environmental changes and sharing the responses within the international community, (2) pursuing sustainable economic use while respecting the ecosystem and the life of indigenous people, and (3) promoting international cooperation in a peaceful and orderly manner based on the rule of law. Foreign Minister Kono delivered a message that Japan will promote cooperation with all stakeholders to realize an "Ideal Arctic." Foreign Minister Kono also presented the following three aspects in Japan's specific efforts and direction for realizing an "Ideal Arctic" – (1) scientific research (promotion of the "Arctic Challenge for Sustainability (ArCS)" project, cooperation with Arctic countries on mitigating black carbon emissions), (2) sustainable economic use (encouraging Japanese companies to pay more attention to Arctic businesses (Hokkaido is a gateway from Asia to the Northern Sea Route), comprehensive energy development cooperation with Russia in the Arctic region, and active participation in the formulation process of international rules for the Arctic), and (3) rule of law (confirmation of "a rule-based maritime order").

"Japan's Arctic Policy" was formulated in 2015 and Japan has been actively promoting efforts in the Arctic. The Third Basic Plan on Ocean Policy, adopted by the Cabinet in May 2018, established a specific section on the Arctic Policy for the first time and positioned it as one of the main measures in Japan's ocean policy. With regard to the Arctic Science Ministerial Meeting, which was held in October with the aims of promoting research and observations and responses to major social issues in the Arctic, as well as further promoting scientific cooperation among relevant countries and with groups of indigenous peoples, it was decided that the next meeting would be held in Japan in 2020 co-chaired by Japan and Iceland. This would be the first meeting held in Asia.

Based on these engagements, Japan will steadily implement the message delivered to the international community by Foreign Minister Kono and contribute to solving global issues related to the Arctic, while securing the interests of Japan and the international community.



Arctic Circle

Yamal LNG project in Russia, Japan is advancing comprehensive energy development cooperation with Russia in the Arctic Region while giving full consideration for the Arctic environment.

B Antarctic**(A) The Antarctic Treaty**

The Antarctic Treaty adopted in 1959 sets forth the following three basic principles: (1) the use of the Antarctica for peaceful purposes, (2) freedom of scientific investigations and international

cooperation, and (3) a freeze on territorial rights and claims.

(B) The Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting (ATCM) and the Protection of Antarctic Environment

At the 41st Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting (ATCM 41) held in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in May 2018, discussions were held on recent issues, including the impact of the increase in the number of tourists on the Antarctic environment, taking into account the yearly increase in the number of travelers to the Antarctic region for tourism and other purposes.

(C) Japan's Antarctic Observation

As for Japan's Antarctic observation activities, based on the 9th six-year plan of the Japanese Antarctic Research Expedition (2016 to 2021), Japan is undertaking efforts to elucidate the role and impact of the Antarctic region on the global system in the past and future, and in particular, to elucidate the actual conditions of global warming and its mechanisms. To that end, in addition to long-term continuous observation, it is also implementing various research and observation activities, including observation using large aperture atmospheric radar.

3 Science and Technology Diplomacy

Science and technology constitute the foundational elements for peace and prosperity that support socioeconomic development, and play a vital role in ensuring safety and security. By harnessing its own advanced science and technology, Japan promotes science and technology diplomacy, thereby contributing to the development of science and technology at home and abroad, the promotion of relations with other countries, the peace and stability of the

international community, and the resolution of global challenges. As part of this effort Japan places emphasis on initiatives implemented through the activities of the Science and Technology Advisor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Prof. Teruo Kishi (Science and Technology Advisor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs) supports the activities of the Foreign Minister from the perspective of science and technology, and provides advice on the utilization of science and technology in the planning and coordination of various foreign policies to the Minister and relevant divisions. He also takes part in public relations activities concerning Japan's science and technology capabilities, while strengthening partnerships with Japanese and foreign stakeholders in the fields of science and technology.

In 2018, the Advisory Board for the Promotion of Science and Technology Diplomacy, chaired by Prof. Kishi, as well as Study Group Meetings were held. As a result of these discussions, recommendations on the utilization of science and technology on the Arctic, under the Advisory Board for the Promotion of Science and Technology Diplomacy, were submitted by Prof. Kishi to State Minister for Foreign Affairs Nakane in March. In May, he also submitted the Recommendation on Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) to Achieve the SDGs and its Guiding Tool, the STI Roadmap, as the means for that, to State Minister for Foreign Affairs Nakane.

In June, Prof. Kishi took the rostrum as a panelist in the Third STI Forum⁵, where he presented Japan's initiatives based on the recommendations related to the STI roadmap as well as the Recommendation for the Future, which was drawn up in 2017, toward the implementation of the SDGs. He also proposed to formulate an STI roadmap by each country.

Furthermore, Prof. Kishi has also implemented

⁵ UN Multi-stakeholder Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation for the SDGs, held at the UN Headquarters in New York on June 5 and 6, 2018.

a project to publicize science, technology and innovation through cooperation with the Cabinet Office and MOFA in various countries⁶, with the aim of enhancing Japan's capability of disseminating information about its prominent scientific and technological strength. The project was implemented in Qatar in November, and he discussed the potential for future cooperation with the relevant organizations and researchers from Qatar.

The Advisor also attends various international conferences alongside with the science and technology advisors of other countries including the U.S., the UK, and New Zealand, where he engages in exchanges of opinions, and strives to build and strengthen networks. The Advisor widely publicizes Japan's efforts in science and technology diplomacy at various fora in Japan and abroad. He attended the Foreign Ministries Science and Technology Advisors Network (FMSTAN) and International Network for Government Science Advice (INGSA) held in Japan in November, where he delivered lectures on Japan's science and technology diplomacy efforts. To raise the level of knowledge within MOFA, science and technology diplomacy seminars are also held periodically.

Japan has concluded 32 science and technology cooperation agreements, and these are now in force with 46 countries and the EU⁷. Based on these agreements, it organizes regular joint committee meetings with these countries to engage in intergovernmental dialogue. In 2018, joint committee meetings were held with the



International Network for Government Science Advice (INGSA) (November 6 and 7, Tokyo)

Czech Republic, Israel, Switzerland, New Zealand, Romania, Russia, Singapore, Norway, China, and Sweden respectively. Attended by delegates from the relevant ministries and institutions, consultations were held on the current status of cooperation in diverse sectors, and on the future direction of cooperation, contributing to promoting science and technology exchange.

With regard to multilateral cooperation, as a member of the Board of the International Science and Technology Center (ISTC) that supports research for peaceful purposes conducted by researchers on weapons of mass destruction from the former Soviet Union, Japan works together with the U.S. and the EU to provide support mainly to countries of Central Asia. Japan also participates in ITER projects to demonstrate the scientific and technological feasibility of nuclear fusion energy.

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- 6** Project (known as "SIP Caravan") to introduce the SIP (Strategic Innovation Promotion Program), which is a new type of Japanese national project for science, technology and innovation, spearheaded by the Council for Science, Technology and Innovation (CSTI) as it exercises its headquarters function to accomplish its role in leading science, technology and innovation beyond the framework of government ministries and traditional disciplines by facilitating coordination among government, industry and academic entities under 11 themes, in order to lay the groundwork for future international cooperation, as well as for the international dissemination of Japan's research and development output, through cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (diplomatic missions overseas).
- 7** The Japan-USSR Science and Technology Cooperation Agreement was succeeded by Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Uzbekistan, Armenia, Georgia, Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, Turkmenistan, and Tajikistan on different dates. The Japan-Czechoslovakia Science and Technology Cooperation Arrangement was succeeded by individual agreements with the Czech Republic and Slovakia in 1993. The Japan-Yugoslavia Science and Technology Cooperation Agreement was succeeded by individual agreements with Croatia, Slovenia, Macedonia (country name at the time), Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Montenegro on different dates.

Column

Achieving the SDGs through Science, Technology and Innovation – as Co-Chair of the 3rd UN STI Forum

Dr. Toshiya Hoshino, Ambassador,
Deputy Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations

I was a professor at a university teaching United Nations diplomacy when I was appointed Ambassador and Deputy Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations in New York in the summer of 2017. On June 5 and 6, 2018, I had the opportunity to co-chair the 3rd UN STI Forum¹ held at UN Headquarters with Mr. Sandoval, Ambassador and Deputy Permanent Representative of Mexico. The STI Forum brings together governments, scientists, the business community, civil society, and entrepreneurs to discuss the promotion and use of science, technology and innovation (STI) to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set by the UN.



Why is STI important now? The SDGs, which were adopted by the UN in 2015 with the slogan, “Leave no one behind,” is a master plan that aims to achieve a sustainable society worldwide by the year 2030. As part of the initiatives to achieve the SDGs, STI could serve as a trump card that would optimize and expand finite resources. One example is electricity. It is said that even today, roughly 20% of the world’s population lives without electricity. In these areas, efforts are being made to place solar panels on top of kiosks scattered around villages and to lend out LED lights that can be used for longer hours with less power, replacing firewood and kerosene lamps. With this improved lighting, children are relieved of the burden of carrying firewood and are able to spend more time on their education and with family at home. In towns, new business opportunities for local residents have opened up. This is a clear example of the power of science and technology literally “lighting up” and improving the quality of people’s lives.

In this way, science and technology aid in the realization of a sustainable society. However, for many people, “STI for SDGs” is not a familiar concept or experience yet. Japan, a nation founded on science and technology, can contribute in many ways. My goal as co-chair of the STI Forum was to make the forum concrete and action-oriented, while providing Japan’s leadership.

Japan is advocating for a human-centered vision of a future society, “Society 5.0”, and working on resolving social issues through the practical applications of STI. Meanwhile, it is important that countries around the world formulate initiatives to achieve the SDGs in accordance with their own circumstances and incorporate them into their national development strategies. However, such efforts will be ineffective if countries and stakeholders around the world only work independently. If there were a roadmap (progress schedule) for people to work together toward common goals, we would be able to implement more systematic efforts and thereby achieve shared progress and results. In line with this thinking, at the 3rd STI Forum, which was attended by about 1,000 participants from various sectors, Prof. Teruo Kishi, Science and Technology Advisor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan, proposed the formulation of an ‘STI Roadmap’ that visualizes ways forward for each country to utilize STI as a means to further develop the SDGs. This proposal received strong support. I realized through this experience that the international community truly needs Japan’s intellectual leadership.



3rd UN STI Forum (June 5-6, New York, U.S.)

In drawing up this roadmap, it is hoped that Japan will lead the way for other nations. Japan is expected to leverage its presidency of the G20 Osaka Summit on Financial Markets and the World Economy and the Seventh Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD7) in 2019 to contribute to the international community. Japan has a major role to play in expanding “STI for SDGs” on a global scale and realizing a world where no one is left behind.

¹ Multi-stakeholder Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)