

State Minister for Foreign Affairs H.E. Mr. UTO's video message
at a Ministerial Meeting for the Formal Establishment of the Group of
Friends for Gender Equality on the occasion of Generation Equality
Forum in Mexico City

Dear distinguished participants,

Good morning. I am UTO Takashi, State Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan. It is my great honor to convey a message today on behalf of the Government of Japan to celebrate the formal establishment of the Group of Friends for Gender Equality.

First of all, I would like to express my heartfelt congratulations and respect to the Government of Mexico for successfully hosting the Generation Equality Forum at the Ministerial-level in Mexico City, making full use of available ICT resources from the start of the Forum on the 29th until today.

COVID-19 revealed the difficulties that are being faced by economically and socially vulnerable people, including women and girls. In particular, the pandemic exposed the gender inequality that existed long before the spread of the virus, and the continuation of the pandemic will likely only further exacerbate these inequality gaps.

At the same time, humankind can re-evaluate our usual ways of thinking and taking action, turning this crisis into an opportunity for improvement. For example, there is space for the international community to work together to build a better society by putting women and girls at the center of efforts to recover from COVID-19.

We should cooperate in advocating for the importance of gender equality in the international community, sharing an idea to build a society that accommodates and reflects the voices of women in all areas and fields. In this regard, I appreciate the Government of Mexico's initiative in establishing of a group for the achievement of gender equality. It is required of all of us, now more than ever, to overcome the common challenges the world faces by thinking and working together.

The Generation Equality Forum is a movement to promote gender equality by all of us who are interested in doing so, regardless of their generation and regardless their gender. I hope the outcomes of this Forum bring us into a future where gender equality is the norm of daily life everywhere.

And on this occasion, it is my great honor to inform you that the Government of Japan has decided to participate in the Action Coalitions, as a member in the theme of Gender Based Violence, in the framework of Gender Equality Forum. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, gender based violence has become an even more severe problem. The Government of Japan is determined to cooperate with other like-minded participating countries to eradicate sexual violence and to build a better society in the post-COVID-19 world.

Thank you very much for your attention.