

Opening Remarks by Prime Minister SUGA
at COVAX Advance Market Commitment (AMC) Summit

Excellencies, Distinguished guests, Ladies and gentlemen,

Thank you very much for your participation in the COVAX AMC Summit today. I would like to extend a very warm welcome to all of you.

I am very honored to co-host this Summit, together with H.E. Professor José Manuel Barroso, Gavi Board Chair.

First, I would like to express my heartfelt condolences for those who have passed away due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

I would also like to express my deepest respect for all health and medical professionals who are at the forefront of the fight against the pandemic.

Every country is doing its utmost to tackle the pandemic, but the battle has been slow, experiencing alternating periods of progress and retreat.

Against this backdrop, and with a strong sense of purpose, I am determined to make this COVAX AMC Summit a success, and achieve significant progress together with you in realizing “equitable access to vaccines”.

We must not allow a country’s specific situation or economic power to determine its access to vaccines.

Based on this belief, the COVAX Facility was launched last year in order to realize “equitable access to vaccines” everywhere in the world, including in developing countries.

Through this unique international cooperation mechanism, vaccine doses have rapidly been provided, and more than 76 million doses have already been delivered to over 120 economies.

This is an unprecedented achievement by the international community working together. I would like to express my respect for the dedication of H.E. Professor Barroso, Gavi Board Chair, Dr. Berkley, Gavi CEO, and all the people who made this possible.

However, in order to overcome the crisis we now face, we need further solidarity and commitment.

More than a year has passed since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Now, over 170 million people have been infected, and of those, over 3.5 million lost their lives. COVID-19 continues to have a tremendous impact on social and economic activities of each country.

In order to deliver more doses of vaccines, which is the key to overcoming this critical phase of the pandemic, contributions in both forms of additional funding and dose sharing from countries that have already secured many doses are essential.

Furthermore, with a view to achieving Universal Health Coverage

guided by the principle of human security, Japan fully supports efforts to ensure equitable access to safe and effective vaccines for as many people as possible.

I would like to invite you to take a firm step forward today, to secure 1.8 billion vaccine doses to protect nearly 30% of the population in AMC-eligible economies.

Let me conclude my remarks by wishing that this Summit will bring hope to the world in overcoming COVID-19 and “building back better.”

Thank you very much for your attention.