

Speech by AKIMOTO Masatoshi, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs

at the welcome reception for the

GEA International Conference 2022 “Challenges and Opportunities for Sustainable Societies: Climate Change, Energy and Food Security”

- Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to welcome all of you to this reception, on the occasion of the GEA International Conference 2022.

- When GEA was established in 1991, neither the UNFCCC (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change) nor the CBD (Convention on Biological Diversity) had been adopted. GEA’s initiatives were indeed groundbreaking at the time when global environmental challenges were not at the forefront of people’s minds. More than thirty years on, global environment agendas are attracting increasing international attention such as the protection of fauna and flora, the conservation of the atmosphere and marine environments and the promotion of their sustainable. It is essential that the entire international community takes effective and decisive actions to tackle these issues.
- Japan, as a country which aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to net-zero by 2050, will pave the way to realize a world in which we can live in harmony with nature by providing strong leadership toward decarbonization in the world and by promoting a virtuous circle for the environment and the economy. By making use of its technologies, Japan will contribute greatly toward a sustainable society in collaboration with all of you present today.

- The theme of this conference is very timely, in terms of current international affairs. While Russia's aggression against Ukraine is having a significant impact on the world's energy and food security, issues such as climate change, energy and food security are intertwined and are threatening the safety of large numbers of people in an unprecedented manner. We need to further strengthen international collaboration in order to achieve a society in which no one is left behind.
- Japan is committed to leading international discussions to resolve the global environmental challenges of our time. Reflecting on today's fruitful discussions, I sincerely hope that the discussions during these two days and GEA's activities become a driving force to succeed in forging a rich global environment for future generations.

Thank you very much for your attention. (End)