

**Video Message by H.E. HAYASHI Yoshimasa, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan at  
the STS *forum* Latin America and the Caribbean High-level Conference 2023**

March 16, 2023

Your Excellency Mr. Marcelo Ebrard Casaubón, Secretary of Foreign Affairs of the United Mexican States,

Prof. KOMIYAMA Hiroshi, Chairman of the STS *forum*,

Distinguished participants,

Good evening, and *Buenas noches*.

I would like to congratulate you on the second Latin America and the Caribbean High-Level Conference of the STS *forum*. I am honored to participate in this conference.

Let me start by paying tribute to the initiative of Secretary Ebrard, as well as the effort of the Mexican Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the STS *forum*, and all those involved in the success of this Conference.

For Japan, Latin America and the Caribbean countries are longstanding friends. This year, we celebrate the 135th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations with Mexico. We have more than 100 years of history of friendship with many countries in the region. Latin America and the Caribbean countries are important partners for Japan, which share fundamental values such as freedom, democracy and the rule of law.

I myself feel very close to Latin America and the Caribbean region. As my first foreign tour of this year, I visited Mexico, Ecuador, Brazil and Argentina in January. My visit reaffirmed my belief in the potential for further collaboration between Japan and Latin America and the Caribbean, and I also delivered a speech on how we should work together and expand "Networks of Solidarity".

I believe that science, technology and innovation, or STI, comprise one of the most important areas to further strengthen our ties. An ongoing good example of such cooperation is the SATREPS Program, which stands for Science and Technology Research Partnership for Sustainable Development. Through the SATREPS program, there has been collaboration in a variety of areas, such as the conservation of the Amazonian forest environment and the mitigation of risks from natural disasters, including earthquakes, which is a common issue between Japan and Latin America and the Caribbean countries. STI also plays a major role in addressing global issues like climate change and infectious diseases, as well as in tackling common challenges such as sustainable and inclusive economic growth. STI has the potential for further development as an area of mutual cooperation between us.

The Kishida administration attaches great importance to STI. This is shown in Prime Minister Kishida's statement at the annual meeting of the STS *forum* in Kyoto in October last year. He stated that innovation through science and technology is an important pillar of the current administration. And as a source of innovation, Japan will strengthen our basic research capabilities, including investing in people, and will promote international brain circulation by cooperating with like-minded countries with shared values.

In this regard, I expect Japan and Latin America and the Caribbean to become even more important partners as we share the values of equity, diversity and inclusiveness in scientific and technological research.

When we think of great researchers who have contributed to solving global problems, we cannot forget the work of Dr. Mario Molina, the Mexican chemist who was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1995. Dr. Molina pointed out the mechanism of ozone depletion caused by CFC gases. Since then, the depleted ozone layer has been steadily recovering. This is the result of concerted efforts at the international level between industry, academia and government.

It is clear that cooperation across sectors and disciplines is essential to solving many of today's challenges. In this context, the STS *forum* is unique in bringing together wisdom from across the countries and disciplines. I am sure that, at today's meeting, experts from various fields gathered and engaged in lively discussions on a wide range of topics related to science and technology.

I sincerely hope that this opportunity will lead to the development of a multi-layered network of collaboration between Japan and Latin America and the Caribbean, and that it will help us further expand our "Network of Solidarity".

*Muchas gracias.*