

JOINT STATEMENT
on friendship and comprehensive partnership in the new era
between Japan and the Kyrgyz Republic

On the invitation of His Excellency Mr. KISHIDA Fumio, Prime Minister of Japan, His Excellency Mr. Sadyr ZHAPAROV, President of the Kyrgyz Republic, conducted an Official Visit to Japan on 17 - 20 November 2023. Prime Minister KISHIDA and President Sadyr ZHAPAROV (hereinafter referred to as "the two leaders"), held comprehensive discussions in a warm and friendly atmosphere. During the discussion, they thoroughly examined the current state and further expansion and deepening of the prospects for the Japan-Kyrgyz relations in various areas: politics, trade and investment, energy, transportation and communications, cultural and humanitarian, among others. They also exchanged views on current regional and international issues of mutual interest.

The two leaders reaffirmed their unwavering commitment to the principles of the previous Joint Statements between Japan and the Kyrgyz Republic.

The two leaders highly appreciated the achievements in key areas of bilateral cooperation over 31 years since the establishment of the diplomatic relations and reaffirmed their commitment to elevating the level of the bilateral relations to new heights and further enhancing multidimensional interaction.

Expressing their common aspirations to elevate the level of the bilateral relations, the two leaders confirmed that the two countries share fundamental values and principles such as freedom, democracy, the rule of law and human rights. The two leaders are pleased to note that there is nothing preventing the two countries from pursuing the progressive development and strengthening of the relations.

Prime Minister KISHIDA, highly appreciating and expressing support for efforts of the Kyrgyz Republic in building a democratic society, stated his intention to continue cooperation to assist the political and economic development of the Kyrgyz Republic.

I . Bilateral Relations

1. Reaffirming that the bilateral relations between Japan and the Kyrgyz Republic have surpassed a 31-year historical period of development and are transitioning to a higher level of friendship, solidarity, and partnership, the two leaders decided to elevate the level of the bilateral relations to a comprehensive partnership. This not only corresponds to mutual interests and contributes to the joint development and prosperity of both countries and peoples but also ensures and strengthens peace and stability at regional and global levels.

2. The two leaders expressed their intention to further expand and improve the contractual and legal basis of bilateral cooperation.

3. The two leaders expressed satisfaction with the historical significance of the visit of the then Prime Minister of Japan, ABE Shinzo, to the Kyrgyz Republic on October 26, 2015, during which a package of documents was signed, providing a powerful impetus for deepening and expanding the bilateral relations.

4. The two leaders recognized the importance of maintaining regular political dialogue at the highest and high levels and activating intergovernmental and interdepartmental ties. They expressed their intention to continue conducting political consultations between the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of both countries for constant exchange of views on relevant issues concerning the development of bilateral relations, as well as on international and regional matters of mutual interest.

5. The two leaders welcomed the signing of the Cooperation Program between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic for 2023-2025 on December 25, 2022, and confirmed their readiness for the practical implementation of the documents within the framework of the Program.

6. The two leaders noted the positive dynamics of parliamentary exchange between the two countries, which is one of the avenues of "people's diplomacy." They expressed the importance of continuing active dialogue within the parliamentary friendship group of the Jogorku Kenesh of the Kyrgyz Republic for cooperation with Japan and the Japan-Kyrgyzstan Parliamentary Friendship League in expanding and developing inter-parliamentary cooperation. They expressed hope that exchanges between the members of parliament of both countries will contribute significantly to further strengthening the bilateral relations.

7. The Japanese side expressed support for the efforts of the Kyrgyz Republic to further develop democracy and expressed hope that the ongoing democratic reforms in the country will lead to further stable and sustainable development of the Kyrgyz Republic. The Kyrgyz side expressed deep gratitude to Japan for providing equipment by grant to automate the voter identification process during elections.

8. The Kyrgyz side expressed deep appreciation for Japan's Official Development Assistance (ODA), including those under the "Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects" programme and the "Grant Assistance for Cultural Grassroots Projects" which played an important role in the socio-economic development. President Sadyr ZHAPAROV commended the swift implementation of projects the Kyrgyz Republic by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). The Kyrgyz side called for continued cooperation, including the provision of grant, for the implementation of strategically important projects that would contribute to the country's sustainable development.

9. The two leaders welcomed the exchange of notes regarding the grant for the Project for the Improvement of Equipment for Irrigation Channel Operation and Maintenance.

10. The two leaders noted the strategic importance of improving transportation infrastructure for the development of the Kyrgyz Republic and strengthening transport connections within and beyond the region. They expressed their intention to complete "the International Main Roads Improvement Project".

11. The two leaders welcomed the successful implementation of the "One Village, One Product (OVOP)" technical cooperation project by JICA, which has made a significant contribution to the socio-economic development of Issyk-Kul region and other parts of the country. Referring to the designation by the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic of OVOP as a national project in December 2022, the two leaders

concluded on the importance of the implementation of OVOP in all regions of the Kyrgyz Republic with support of JICA and Japanese companies.

12. The Kyrgyz side highly appreciated the resumption of activities by Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers and Senior Volunteers sent to Kyrgyzstan after the COVID-19 pandemic, who are engaged in various fields.

13. The two leaders shared the view that trade and economic partnership will contribute to strengthening trade and economic ties between the two countries. They expressed their intentions to further develop cooperation in the areas of economy and trade, infrastructure, transportation, energy, industrial production, investments, in the field of subsoil use in terms of geological exploration and mining, agriculture, digitalization, tourism, and human capital development.

14. The two leaders expressed the importance of future discussion of a bilateral investment agreement.

15. In order to enhance trade and investment relations between the two countries, the two leaders expressed their intention to continue cooperation in line with the Memorandum of Cooperation between the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) and the National Agency under the President of the Kyrgyz Republic, signed in Tokyo in December 2022.

16. The two leaders also concurred on strengthening interactions between relevant agencies of both countries in the economic field, aiming to identify cooperation prospects, exchange views, and activate bilateral interactions. The creation of an intergovernmental Japan-Kyrgyz commission on trade, economic, cultural and humanitarian cooperation in the future could serve as an effective platform.

17. The two leaders welcomed the signing of the Memorandum of Cooperation between the Ministry of Justice of Japan and the Ministry of Justice of the Kyrgyz Republic in the field of legal and justice affairs.

18. The two leaders expressed satisfaction with cooperation in the healthcare sector and welcomed the signing of the Memorandum of Cooperation between the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare of Japan and the Ministry of Health of the Kyrgyz Republic.

19. The two leaders expected further cooperation through the JCM based on the Memorandum of Cooperation on the Joint Crediting Mechanism between the Government of Japan and the Cabinet of Ministers of the Kyrgyz Republic, signed on July 6, 2023, to contribute to the achievement of both countries' Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), through the diffusions of leading decarbonizing technologies to the Kyrgyz Republic. The two leaders expected cooperation for the formation of specific JCM projects.

20. The Kyrgyz side highly appreciated the contribution of the Kyrgyz Japan Center for Human Development (KRJC) in training personnel in the Kyrgyz Republic. The two leaders expressed hope that the Center will become a fundamental institution for training business personnel who will contribute to the development of the market economy and an increase in specialists with knowledge of the Japanese language. They reached a consensus that efforts to prepare highly qualified personnel are essential for the economic development of the Kyrgyz Republic.

21. The Kyrgyz side expressed deep gratitude for and emphasized its interest in the further training of Kyrgyz state officials within the framework of Japan's Project for Human Resource Development Scholarship (JDS), which commenced in 2007. The two leaders highlighted the fact that JDS scholars of the Kyrgyz Republic contribute to the development of democracy and the market economy in the Kyrgyz Republic and will continue to be the bridge of friendship between the two countries.

22. The two leaders confirmed the important role of expanding the exchange of human resources in deepening relations between the two countries. They reaffirmed the significance of student exchanges and expressed their intention to continue necessary support for increasing youth exchanges, including in scientific and technical fields, and to stimulate cooperation between academic institutions.

23. The two leaders noted that cultural and humanitarian cooperation contributes to strengthening friendship and mutual understanding between the two peoples. They expressed interest in continuing active cooperation in the fields of culture, education, sports, and youth.

24. The two leaders expected further cooperation based on the Memorandum of Cooperation between the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare and the National Police Agency of Japan and the Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Migration of the Kyrgyz Republic on a Basic Framework for Information Partnership for Proper Operation of the System pertaining to Foreign Human Resources with the Status of Residence of "Specified Skilled Worker" signed on July 6, 2023.

25. The Japanese side welcomed the decision of the Kyrgyz Republic to participate in the Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan and expressed hope that this exhibition would provide an opportunity to promote bilateral cooperation.

26. The two leaders welcomed the exchange of Notes Verbales on the visa waiver measure for diplomatic and official passport holders.

II. Regional and International Cooperation

27. The two leaders expressed readiness to strengthen cooperation within the framework of the "Central Asia + Japan" Dialogue. They highly appreciated the outcomes of the 9th Meeting of Foreign Ministers of the countries participating in the "Central Asia + Japan" Dialogue, held on December 24, 2022, in Tokyo. The two leaders shared the idea of the Dialogue aimed at consolidating joint efforts to contribute to addressing regional challenges for the sustainable development of Central Asian region.

28. The two leaders expressed their determination to overcome challenges and strengthen cooperation to achieve sustainable socio-economic development in a free and open Central Asia with emphasis on "investment in people" and "quality of growth" in economy, society and human exchanges. They confirmed their intention to support regional cooperation, jointly develop and propose initiatives. The two leaders welcomed establishment of "Central Asia + Japan" Dialogue Economic and Energy Dialogue which was held on September 26, 2023, in Tokyo. The two leaders shared the importance on accelerating preparation, development or utilization of a road map

toward net zero goal by 2050 or later, as well as on accelerating energy transition project using public-private financing and on promoting implementation of the JCM.

29. The two leaders concurred on the importance of enhancing efforts to respond to transnational organized crime, border control and cross-border cooperation, prevention of terrorism and extremism, capacity building support within the Central Asian region, and regional social-economic infrastructure improvement to help stabilize the entire region, including Afghanistan, in order to address the traditional risks of instability. The Kyrgyz side expressed deep appreciation for Japan's constant support provided to the implementation of the national project within the framework of the United Nations Office on drugs and crime Program.

30. The two leaders exchanged views on the situation in Afghanistan, including restoring sustainable livelihood and resilience of local communities and improving the human rights situation of the ethnic groups, minorities, women, and girls, especially through addressing the concerns of international community on restrictions on education and employment opportunities for women and girls.

31. The two leaders concurred on the importance of the efforts being initiated by the international community on confidence building with the Taliban and constructive engagement in the process to realize secure, stable and peaceful Afghanistan, free from terrorism, war and drugs. Acknowledging the necessity of the continuous support to the people of Afghanistan, the two leaders emphasized the importance of both countries' contributions to the Afghanistan and stabilization of the region.

32. The two leaders expressed recognition that issues related to the effective use of water and energy resources are crucial for the sustainable development of Central Asia. The Japanese side expressed its intention to cooperate bilaterally in enhancing the level of socio-economic development in the Kyrgyz Republic.

33. The two leaders, noting the alignment of their positions on many pressing international issues, emphasized the importance of deepening the interaction between the two countries within the framework of the United Nations (UN) and other international and regional structures. In particular, the two leaders underscored the need for cooperation to achieve concrete outcomes in reform of the UN Security Council.

34. The two leaders confirmed that terror attacks are impermissible and must be condemned anywhere in the world.

35. The two leaders affirmed that at the Ninth Foreign Ministers' Meeting of the "Central Asia + Japan" Dialogue held in Tokyo on December 24, 2022, the Ministers shared recognition on the importance of mutual cooperation as partners maintaining and strengthening the free and open international order based on the rule of law anywhere in the world. They reaffirmed the commitment to upholding international law, including the UN Charter, particularly the principles of respect for independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries, prohibition of the threat or use of force and peaceful settlement of disputes.

36. The two leaders also had a frank exchange of views on the current extremely difficult geopolitical situation and reaffirmed the importance of mutual cooperation as partners in maintaining and strengthening the free and open international order based on the rule of law anywhere in the world and shared the view that any threat or use of

force are prohibited and not to be tolerated in any region. The two leaders expressed their unwavering commitment to respect the UN Charter and other norms of international law, in particular the principles of respect for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries, prohibition of the threat or use of force and peaceful settlement of disputes. In addition, the leaders of the two countries expressed concern about the current situation on international markets, due to rising prices for energy and food.

37. The two leaders concurred on the importance of ensuring food, energy and logistics security against the backdrop of global supply chain instability and discussed strengthening cooperation in this area. The two leaders also confirmed the importance of strengthening coordination and cooperation in addressing challenges in economic security, including economic coercion, and the importance of transparent and fair development finance.

38. The two leaders noted the importance of maintaining and strengthening the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) as the cornerstone of the international nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime and concurred in continuing to work together to this end.

39. The two leaders reaffirmed their commitment to the complete denuclearization of North Korea in accordance with UN Security Council resolutions, and stressed the importance of resolving humanitarian issues of concern to the international community, including the abductions issue.

40. The two leaders are united in the opinion that close cooperation between countries on the international stage is of vital importance for maintaining peace and stability in the Central Asian region and the world at large. The two leaders expressed their intention to collaborate within international organizations such as the UN, World Bank, International Monetary Fund, and other global international organizations, exchanging information and coordinating their positions on important international issues.

41. The two leaders intended to collaborate on the international stage to achieve common goals, such as sustainable development and poverty reduction.

42. The two leaders expressed deep concern about the situation in Gaza. The two leaders underline the importance of respect for the principles and norms of international humanitarian law that entails the protection of the civilian population and civilian infrastructure.

III Conclusion

43. The two leaders confirmed that the visit of President Sadyr ZHAPAROV, to Japan was an important political event aimed at further strengthening friendship and cooperation between the two countries.

44. President Sadyr ZHAPAROV, expressed gratitude to Their Majesties the Emperor and Empress of Japan, as well as the Government of Japan, for the warm welcome and hospitality extended to the Kyrgyz delegation during their stay in Tokyo, and invited Prime Minister KISHIDA to visit the Kyrgyz Republic in return at his convenience.

**Prime Minister
of Japan
KISHIDA Fumio**

**President
of the Kyrgyz Republic
Sadyr ZHAPAROV**