

**Statement by Foreign Minister KAMIKAWA Yoko  
at the WPS Focal Point Network High-Level Side Event  
(September 21, 2023)**

Secretary Blinken and Minister Odobescu,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

Last year, I participated as a panelist in a symposium on Women Peace and Security. Inspired by this experience, and in cooperation with the U.S. Department of State and others who are here today, I established a parliamentary league on WPS to promote the WPS agenda in Japan. Understanding that it was a concept hardly known among Japanese people, I started to promote this agenda quickly and intensively with my fellow diet members.

Since then, as a member of the Diet, I have been making proposals to the government while learning about advanced practices in other countries through series of dialogues under the league's initiative. As a result of our advocacy, WPS was included in our Basic Policies on Economic and Fiscal Management and Reform 2023, which serves as a basis for the Japanese budgetary process. Our advocacy also influenced respective ministries such as the Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Justice, Fire and Disaster Management Agency, National Police Agency, and others to work on identifying WPS focal points for them to be able to interact with their counterparts abroad. I am very pleased to be back in New York today as the Minister for Foreign Affairs to promote WPS further.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Government of Japan, led by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, is now stepping up efforts in promoting the WPS agenda at the United Nations and in the field of international cooperation. We recognize the significance of WPS, which brings issues of women and girls that are traditionally discussed under social and economic affairs to the international peace and security sphere. Our revised National Action Plan published in April of this year elaborated on the advocacies that we have done and covers all ten Security Council resolutions on WPS. It refers not only to promoting the protection of women and girls in conflict areas, including against Gender-Based Violence, and participation of women in peacebuilding, but also to increasing women's leadership roles in natural and man-made disaster prevention and mitigation efforts and decision-making. It further refers to promoting efforts to change the attitude and behavior of men and boys, and to promoting initiatives that contribute to the WPS agenda in Japan.

In light of the increasing number of natural disasters in many parts of the world, I believe it is extremely important to incorporate the WPS agenda in the areas of disaster response, disaster prevention, and mitigation. Depending on their scale, natural disasters also require international collaboration to respond. I would like to emphasize that it is important to enhance partnership among all actors, including Focal Point Network members and civil society, to share information and be able to act through such partnerships swiftly and effectively and mobilize appropriate resources.

For advancement of the WPS agenda, the key is how to incorporate the agenda into the various high-level discussions taking place at the United Nations, and how to implement the National Action Plans that each country has developed or is developing.

The Government of Japan, as a non-permanent member of the Security Council, will continue to promote the WPS discussion as an important agenda for the UN, while also taking over the spirit of the "Presidency Trio for Women Peace and Security" formed under the leadership of Ireland, Mexico, and Kenya.

I further believe that countries need to work even harder to promote the domestic WPS agenda, especially in collaboration with civil society.

From my experience as a diet member, I believe that establishing a parliamentary league, and working on creating a nation-wide structure for WPS are useful strategies.

In addition, Japan would like to deepen cooperation with Asian countries, especially ASEAN, in the field of WPS and share Asian perspectives.

In Asia, many countries are prone to natural disasters, resulting in a large number of evacuations every year. We must not overlook the various problems caused by the lack of women's perspectives. There are still many things that can be done together, such as sharing good practices and

disaster prevention and mitigation efforts.

As this year marks the 50th anniversary year of Japan-ASEAN Friendship and Cooperation, Japan intends to deepen cooperation with ASEAN in the area of WPS, too.

The WPS Focal Point Network is a very useful forum for sharing lessons learned and good practices. Japan would like to further contribute to promote the WPS agenda through sector-wide cooperation and with the members of the Network.

Thank you very much.