

2024 OECD Ministerial Council Meeting
Keynote Speech by Prime Minister Kishida
~ Co-creation of the Flow of Change~

Secretary-General Mr. Cormann, distinguished guests,

It is my great honor to serve as Chair of the Ministerial Council Meeting on this landmark 60th anniversary of Japan's accession to the OECD.

In addition to the ongoing Russian aggression against Ukraine, we have witnessed new horrors in the Middle East since last year, and many other conflicts are occurring around the globe. At the same time, the international community is witnessing a greater diversification with the rise of emerging powers, making it more difficult than ever to reach consensus.

We are also confronted with the aggravated crises of climate change and a series of natural disasters. Earlier this year, a devastating earthquake struck the Noto Peninsula in Japan. We are grateful for the warm messages of sympathy from the representatives of many nations and organizations, including the Secretary-General Mr. Cormann.

These shifts are having a profound impact on the global economy. We are facing inflation, disruptions in energy and food supplies, and risks of fragmentation in global supply chains. We are now at a crossroads in putting the world back on a stable growth path.

While at the same time, at this turning point in history, the changes of era and hardships we are experiencing are also opportunities to realize a more prosperous life. Today, I would like to address the importance of uniting under the spirit of 'Co-creating the Flow of Change' and overcoming the crises facing the international community.

A fundamental strength of the OECD lies in its human resource of over 2,000 economists, and its extensive data and analytical capabilities which contribute to policy-making across nations.

In Japan, we are leveraging this expertise, including the “OECD Economic Survey of Japan” released this January, to transform initiatives to solve social challenges into new engines for growth.

Japan is advocating a New Form of Capitalism, transitioning from a cost-cutting to a growth-oriented economic model. This transition is underpinned by the strongest wage increases in nearly 30 years and record-high levels of capital investment. These are favorable tailwinds that need to be further accelerated to revive Japan's earning power.

In alignment with OECD recommendations, Japan will advance its initiatives to increase productivity. Science and technology are the key to industrial structural transformation and the foundation to cultivate our future. We are bolstering support for new frontiers and innovation initiatives such as AI, autonomous driving, space, and overseas expansion of SMEs, as well as assistance to start-ups.

Japan attaches importance to promoting green transformation, aiming to simultaneously realize a stable energy supply, economic growth, and decarbonization. With this in mind, we will adopt “Green Transformation National Strategy.” Under the “Asia Zero Emission Community” platform, we will advocate an energy transition model to the international community that achieves the common goal of net-zero through innovation and various pathways.

Like other OECD members, Japan faces the challenge of a declining population. We are committed to reversing this trend as well removing employment barriers for women and the elderly, in pursuit of sustainable growth.

Japan will continue to collaborate effectively with the OECD to

shape better policies and create a significant flow of changes, together with member countries.

Distinguished guests,

The Ministerial Council Meeting is a unique opportunity for countries with shared values to come together and discuss global and progressive issues.

Over the next two days, we seek to deepen our discussions and reach a common understanding towards shaping a rules-based free and open international order. Japan will contribute to discussions drawing on its experiences and achievements as the holder of last year's G7 presidency.

Maintaining and expanding a rules-based, free and fair economic order, with the WTO at its core, remains on top of the international agenda. We need to discuss further on the challenges facing free and open trade and investment, and sustainability and inclusivity in trade, both of which form the foundation of the international economic order.

In recent years, we also need to strengthen our cooperation to ensure economic resilience and economic security, such as addressing economic coercion and non-market policies and practices, enhancing supply chain resilience, and protecting critical technologies and critical infrastructure. The OECD can contribute to the members' efforts by forming global standards through objective analyses and assessments. As the former holder of the G7 Presidency, Japan will share the outcomes of the Hiroshima Summit and advance collaboration with like-minded countries and organizations. At this Ministerial Council Meeting, we will have a separate dedicated session to discuss economic resilience and economic security.

The climate crisis is a challenge common to all humankind that

cannot be postponed, and it demands a holistic effort from all nations. We must address issues concerning climate change, biodiversity, and environmental pollution in an integrated manner. As we pursue the transformation towards net-zero, circular, and nature-positive economies, let us advance discussions to foster synergies among these efforts.

As the landscape of development cooperation undergoes rapid changes, it is essential that member countries, together with non-member countries and various international organizations, transcend the boundaries between public and private sectors to pool diverse knowledge and make efforts towards sustainable development. The OECD's data and analytical capabilities on Official Development Assistance (ODA), along with the promotion of OECD standards are crucial to attract private investment and address the development financing needs of developing countries. This in turn leads to peace and stability in the international community.

Digital technology is one of the areas where the OECD can leverage its strengths the most, and we expect the OECD to continue playing a central role moving forward. The OECD has also been at the forefront of international discussions on AI, including the development of AI principles. Building on the outcomes of the Hiroshima AI Process, we will advance discussions towards achieving safe, secure, and trustworthy AI.

I have just announced the establishment of the Hiroshima AI Process Friends Group. Let us collaborate as nations united by a common purpose to address the universal opportunities and risks brought about by AI, and work towards achieving safe, secure, and trustworthy AI. We will also make steady progress on operationalizing Data Free Flow with Trust (DFFT), which forms the foundation of these efforts.

Distinguished guests,

Sixty years ago, after becoming a member of GATT and the UN, Japan became the first Asian country to join the OECD, marking a significant step in re-engaging with the international community.

Sixty years later, as the international community has undergone significant changes, facing multipolarity, division and conflict, and as uncertainty and opacity have increased, the OECD needs to change too. It has become increasingly important for the OECD, which shares common values, to extend its outreach to non-member countries around the world.

Rather than imposing values, it is essential for the OECD to act as a companion in growth and development. This should be done by embracing the concept of 'co-creation' and closely aligning with the needs of others.

From this perspective, we welcome countries from Latin America, Central and Eastern Europe and Southeast Asia that are joining hands with the OECD on the road to accession.

We are pleased with the positive developments in establishing a framework for cooperation between Africa and the OECD. We are looking forward to seeing the OECD's expertise effectively utilized in advancing Africa's own initiatives, such as Agenda 2063, leading to an expression of intents to join the OECD from Africa in the future.

This year, we have seen historic developments, including the adoption of accession roadmaps for Argentina and Indonesia, and Thailand's application for membership. Strengthening ties with increasingly important regions represents the future direction for the OECD.

As one of the few Asian members, Japan will continue to act as a bridge between the OECD and the Asian region, contributing to the

OECD's continued leadership in the global economy.

Distinguished guests,

In Japan, the 60th anniversary is known as 'kanreki,' an important milestone signifying a new beginning in life.

Together, let's pave the way for a more prosperous future over the next sixty years.

Thank you very much.