

World Humanitarian Summit
Side Event on “Strengthening the Humanitarian-Development Nexus”

Statement read by H.E. Ms. Kasuko SHIRAIISHI
Ambassador for Women, Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs,
on behalf of Mr. Yasuo FUKUDA
Representative of the Government of Japan and former Prime Minister

17:00-18:45, 23 May, 2016

Excellencies and distinguished participants,

We have gathered here in Istanbul to bring together our wisdom to face the unprecedented humanitarian crises that stands before us. It gives me great pleasure to be able to hold this event in the aim of finding solutions to the displacement issue, together with the UNHCR and the UNDP.

The world has been faced with serious issues surrounding refugees and displaced persons due to the numerous regional conflicts that have arisen since the end of the Cold War. Since then, we here today have seen that in order to save people, soon after providing life-saving humanitarian assistance, we must quickly begin to provide development assistance as well. In this way, we have cultivated our assistance philosophy of the strengthening the “humanitarian and development nexus.” Today, with the next wave of refugee crises imminent before us, now is the time for us to make a global appeal on the importance of the “humanitarian and development nexus”.

There are structural problems of poverty and disparity. In the background of the crises unfolding before our eyes, we must also address the difficult but important issue of restoring tolerant societies.

That explains why we need to save those who are in front of us in desperate circumstances. That is also why it is important to conduct education and vocational training that will empower the displaced people so that after they return to their homelands, they can live ever in peace, raise children and nurture rich cultures. Ultimately, rich and tolerant societies are built on the wisdom of the people.

Let me add that our fight will most likely be a long one. As long as it is, we need to ensure that host countries can maintain their capacities. However, these host countries could soon reach their limits, let's say, infrastructure such as water supply and sewerage system, once acceptance of refugees takes place. Hence we need to pay serious attention to these difficult issues that host communities face on a daily basis. Solidarity with the host communities; this is another essential aspect of the "humanitarian-development nexus."

Excellencies and distinguished participants,

The Solutions Alliance established in 2014 by the UNHCR and the UNDP has played a key role in promoting global awareness of the humanitarian-development nexus. The roundtable meetings, held by the Solutions Alliance last February, shared the vision such as the importance of listening not only to refugees themselves but also to a wide range of stakeholders including host countries' governments. In this regard, the Solutions Alliance and Japan are "comrades", who truly share the same values.

It is truly time for us to wholeheartedly engage in taking concrete actions to strengthen the "humanitarian-development nexus". In collaboration with the UNHCR and the UNDP, Japan has been implementing the "humanitarian-development nexus" in nine countries including Turkey, Uganda, and Zambia, providing a total of approximately 110 million US dollars assistance for refugees in both of humanitarian and development aspects, of which the latter is to support the host communities.

Today, I would like to consolidate the direction that we need to take in order to address the displacement issues by listening to the actual voices on the field as the "five principles for strengthening the humanitarian-development nexus." With the announcement of a Joint Statement.

I sincerely hope that this event will serve as an important step toward finding durable solutions to the displacement issue.

Thank you for your attention.