

## Launch of eTrade for All Initiative

Amphitheatre, KICC, Nairobi, Kenya (July 18<sup>th</sup>, 2016)

Statement by H.E. Ambassador SUZUKI

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan

At the outset, Japan would like to congratulate the Secretary General Dr. Kituy and the UNCTAD Secretariat for the launch of eTrade for All.

E-commerce, or digital economy, is transforming the global economy rapidly. In particular, e-commerce will offer significant opportunities to developing countries and SMEs by providing direct access to the global market. It will help to promote the achievement of inclusive economic growth and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Yet a number of challenges remain to be addressed in order to unleash the full potential of e-commerce. These include regulatory frameworks, infrastructure development and capacity building, but one of the key issues is to better understand the real impact of e-commerce, and to raise awareness of the benefits derived from it.

UNCTAD has been doing substantive and meaningful work on e-commerce for many years. Most recently, the e-commerce week, which was held in April in Geneva, was a great success.

We think that eTrade for All is a relevant and timely initiative and another important contribution made by UNCTAD to support the efforts for coordinated assistance on e-commerce made by the international community.

Japan, over the past 40 years, has assisted developing countries in the areas of ICT infrastructure and related human resource development, through financial aid and technical assistance. As a recent example, since 2015, Japan is conducting a pilot project of an electronic payment system using smart card technology in rural areas of Mozambique.

The sphere of e-commerce is broad and further evolving; it is therefore a common challenge for both donors and recipients to identify the areas of possible cooperation. In this regard, Japan will continue to make further efforts, in close collaboration with other donors and various international organizations under eTrade for All, so as to increase the synergy among various stakeholders.

Thank you.

(327 words)