

Statement by His Excellency, Mr. Shinzo Abe
Prime Minister of Japan

At the United Nations Security Council High-level Briefing on Syria
United Nations Security Council Chamber in New York
Wednesday, 21 September 2016

Mr. President,
Mr. Secretary-General,
Members of the Security Council,

Our agenda today, the situation in Syria, is an urgent one. This ongoing international crisis requires a show of solidarity from the Security Council. We discussed Syria at the G7 Ise-Shima Summit this year and confirmed the importance of cooperation among G7 members. Today, I would like to reaffirm our commitment in the Security Council.

We deeply deplore the situation that the nation-wide cessation of hostilities based on the agreement between the United States and Russia is in danger. The International Syria Support Group was convened yesterday, and the commitment was reaffirmed that the international society as a whole will support the agreement. Japan took part in that commitment. The Security Council must strongly promote the transition to a political process in which violence is ceased and humanitarian access is improved under the leadership of Special Envoy Mr. Staffan de Mistura.

The joint investigation by the United Nations and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons identified those responsible for the use of chemical weapons in Syria last month. This month, it was reported that chlorine-based attacks were conducted in Syria. The use of chemical weapons is utterly unacceptable under any circumstances. The Security Council must unite in order to hold perpetrators to account and bring those responsible to justice.

Japan, as a member of the Security Council and the International Syria Support Group, calls on international society and all relevant stakeholders to fully abide by the Security Council's Syria-related resolutions.

In collaboration with the UN and other international organizations, Japan has provided non-military assistance and aided in creating as conducive a climate as possible for the political settlement of the Syrian crisis. Japan has supported efforts to build societies which are resilient against violent extremism by combining urgent humanitarian assistance with development assistance for the people of Syria and neighboring countries.

This support has centered on three areas. Firstly, Japan has extended assistance to all Syrians inside and outside of Syria. Secondly, Japan has provided support to vocational training and capacity building programs for women. Thirdly, Japan has provided assistance to alleviate the burdens faced by neighboring countries in order to support regional stability.

It is especially important to bolster efforts to build societies which are resilient against violent extremism. In collaboration with the UN, Japan has supported territories liberated from violent extremism in order to promote stabilization. We have provided assistance to people who are socially marginalized and have not even received basic assistance.

As one example, Japan has collaborated with the United Nations Development Programme to implement the Emergency Employment Project in northern Jordan, where the unemployment rate has risen amidst a wave of Syrian refugees. This project has supported job-seeking and business ventures for more than one thousand young people.

Nadia, a Jordanian woman, recalled, “I cannot forget the moment when I heard over the phone that I had been accepted to participate in the project.” Nadia, who has three children, acquired the necessary knowledge to start a business and decided to open a kitchen utensil store. We believe that promoting women’s social participation and developing a sense of involvement among young people are effective means to create resilient and tolerant societies and to prevent violent extremism.

With this in mind, Japan provided more than 1.26 billion US dollars to Syria, Iraq, and neighboring countries from 2011 to 2015. In addition, Japan is implementing 1.13 billion US dollars of assistance to Syria, Iraq, and neighboring countries this year. Japan is focusing in particular on implementing humanitarian aid, including the

provision of food, water and vaccinations, as well as assistance for economic development and social stability, including education and vocational training in collaboration with the UN and other international organizations.

However, the success of Japan's efforts depends on how we resolve the current Syrian crisis. Japan, as one of the UN Security Council members, reiterates its determination to work on this matter in a responsible manner.

Thank you very much.

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