

(Provisional Translation)

It is my pleasure to hold this conference on supporting job creation and vocational training to facilitate weapons reduction for Iraqi society here in Tokyo today.

First of all, I would like to offer my sincere condolences to those who lost their lives to ISIL, Daesh.

In paying my profound tribute to Prime Minister Abadi, I would like to give him a big applause together with all of you for his unparalleled leadership in fighting Daesh to retrieve all Iraqi territories last year.

However, the struggle is not over yet. A genuine victory will be achieved through building prosperous and safe Iraq that never allows violent extremist organizations from reemergence, based on the military victory that has been secured.

The international community has move forward in assisting post-Daesh reconstruction in Iraq as an international conference was held in Kuwait in February. Japan will also continue supporting Iraq through humanitarian and stabilization aid, as well as yen loan projects for infrastructure reconstruction.

I heard that the Iraqis call Japan “kawkab al-yaban” meaning that Japan is like a country on another planet. I am very pleased to hear that this represents a commendation to Japan which overcame the aftermath of the war and achieved a peaceful society and economic development.

Japan, in its new endeavor, will take a lead in transforming Iraqi society to a more peaceful one. Improvement of security requires development and vice versa. I would like to advocate international support for the Government of Iraq’s efforts under a new approach of integrating security and development initiatives.

For example, peaceful livelihood opportunities will be given to the people,

which would encourage them to voluntarily submit their arms. This would reduce the widely spread arms in the Iraqi society, and eventually make it safer.

In materializing this, we would like to conduct research and analysis with the expertise of the countries and organizations which are represented here today. We also intend to establish a working group for the purpose of utilizing the outcome of the research and analysis for concrete measures to be taken. The group will also study a possibility of creating an aid mechanism to Iraq, including establishment of a funding mechanism.

Japan will support the efforts of the people and the government of Iraq by mobilizing its knowledge of its own post-war reconstruction, its history of weapons control, and its experience in oversea assistance, so that one day Iraq will be called “kawkab al-Iraq”.

I wish that this conference will mark a beginning of a path for Iraq towards an international model of a country that has overcome the destruction and sacrifice of terrorism and has accomplished reconstruction by achieving a peaceful society and economic prosperity.

Thank you for your kind attention.