

T20キックオフ会合 山田政務官による開会挨拶

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Distinguished T20 members, ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to congratulate you on holding the “T20 Japan 2019 Inception Conference.”

It is a great honor for me to be here to speak on behalf of the Government of Japan.

The international community is currently facing difficult issues to be tackled together by government, academia, and business.

At a time of challenge and opportunity, Japan is going to host the G20 for the first time next year.

Among today's participants are prominent scholars and experts in various fields such as economics, climate change, development, sociology, international politics, and IT.

I would like to ask all of you to work together to come up with policy recommendations to the G20 as its "Idea Bank."

While globalization has made progress and brought great benefits, we also hear voices of discontent and insecurity caused by the widening inequality.

The tendency of protectionism and inward looking policies are on the rise across the world.

Under such circumstances, as Japan assumes the G20 presidency, we are determined to lead discussions, including on global economy and environment.

Looking ahead to the G20 Osaka Summit next June, Japan will make every effort to realize a vision of "human-centered future society" that is free, open, inclusive and sustainable.

We will contribute to achieving economic growth and reducing disparity at the same time, as well as addressing global issues with a focus on the SDGs.

(貿易)

First of all, international trade and investment are vital engines to enhance economic growth, productivity, innovation, job creation and development.

Japan achieved remarkable economic growth under the free trade system after World War II.

This wouldn't have been possible without a free, fair, open, and rules-based multilateral trading system.

When we look at the world history, however, the anxieties and dissatisfactions over rapid changes of the global economy have occasionally caused temptation to move toward protectionism, including unfair trade practices that caused acute conflicts of interest among countries involved.

As a standard-bearer of free trade, Japan is determined to

continue to exercise strong leadership aimed at further enhancing a free, fair, open, and rules-based trading system. We took the lead in discussion on TPP11 that is to enter into force this month.

The Government also signed the Japan-EU EPA this summer.

Needless to say, Japan upholds its commitment to the WTO. We will spare no effort towards the swift conclusion of RCEP negotiations, which will lead to realizing an enormous free-trade area in East Asia.

These are just a few examples that demonstrate Japan's unwavering commitment to free trade.

(SDGs)

Next agenda I would like to mention is the SDGs.

The Government of Japan has been promoting the SDGs with the establishment of the SDGs Promotion Headquarters chaired by Prime Minister Abe and with the participation of all the Cabinet Ministers.

Based on the concept of Human Security, Japan will accelerate concrete efforts to achieve the SDGs in areas such as health and education towards the G20 and TICAD7 in Japan, as well as the SDGs leaders-level follow-up meeting in New York next year.

Achieving the SDGs requires all stakeholders to cooperate and share respective expertise and experiences.

Japan would like to ask academia, including think tanks, for its precious insights to create society which “leaves no-one behind.”

(UHC)

Promoting UHC, or Universal Health Coverage, is an important segment for achieving the SDGs.

It will help everyone enjoy health services at affordable costs and it is an investment for the future towards 2030 and beyond.

The United Nations will thus hold a high-level meeting on UHC in September 2019.

In this connection, Japan would like to have further discussions on the importance of UHC at the G20 Summit in June, as well as at TICAD7 in August and at the G20 Health Ministers' meeting in October next year in Japan.

(環境・気候変動)

Climate change is another vital issue.

I suppose the brutal heat of this summer across the world is still vivid in everyone's memory.

Japan also suffered from unprecedented torrential rain and major typhoons.

Climate change cannot be resolved without the full

engagement of the entire international community, and the steady implementation of the Paris Agreement is needed. We must swiftly take robust actions in a larger scale.

On the other hand, investment for sustainable energy sources, clean energy technologies and infrastructure brings opportunities for innovation, sustainable growth, competitiveness, and job creation.

We believe measures against climate change should not be merely regarded as costs but rather opportunities to enhance competitiveness.

Moreover, addressing climate change is a critical pillar for achieving the SDGs.

With this understanding, the Government of Japan will focus on accelerating the virtuous cycle between environment and growth.

Japan will lead discussions towards the full-scale implementation of the Paris Agreement, which will start from 2020.

Furthermore, we must not forget about the issue of marine plastic litter.

It is important for each state and its citizens to address this issue as their own agenda.

We would like to set forth an initiative of effective measures to combat this problem globally at the G20 Osaka Summit, and would like to drive global efforts to this end.



(連結性・質の高いインフラ投資)

Last but certainly not least, to achieve global economic growth and sustainable development in developing countries, it is essential to enhance physical, people-to-people and institutional connectivity, and thereby to stimulate the flow of people, goods, and capital.

On the other hand, substandard infrastructure can be a bottleneck in the economic growth and in enhancing connectivity.

It is thus important to secure both the quality and quantity of infrastructure.

Looking ahead to the G20 Osaka Summit, Japan will continue its efforts to elaborate international standards of quality infrastructure, such as open access, transparency, economic efficiency in view of life cycle cost, as well as fiscal soundness.

(結語)

Ladies and gentlemen,

In addition to the challenges that I mentioned today, there are numerous other issues that the international community should tackle with under multilateral cooperation, such as the digitalization of economy, international financial architecture, cooperation with Africa, aging populations, and immigration.

Moreover, I find it essential that, not only governments but also think tanks and civil societies mobilize their expertise and cooperation.

I sincerely welcome vibrant discussions on these issues by all of you present here in today's T20 meeting.

Japan will demonstrate leadership at the G20 next year by taking various opinions and views into account to resolve global challenges.

I wish the T20 Inception Conference every success.

Thank you very much.

(1,210 words)