

Reception
on the Occasion of UN Capacity Building Training for
Women's Protection Advisers
Opening Remarks by Mr. Kenji Yamada, Parliamentary Vice-Minister
for Foreign Affairs

Excellencies,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am Kenji Yamada, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Thank you for coming to this reception held on the commemorative occasion of the very first UN Capacity Building Training for Women's Protection Advisers, which is co-organized by Japan and the United Nations.

I also would like to note that the U.S. Government has co-funded the development of training materials for this course.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the U.S. Government for its co-sponsorship.

This year marks the 70th anniversary since UN Peacekeeping Operations started in 1948.

I first would like to congratulate what we have together achieved through UN PKO.

But at the same time, I would like to remind you that our ultimate goal should be the realization of a peaceful world without peacekeeping operations.

In reality, however, the role of UN Peacekeeping has not diminished; instead, its function has increasingly diversified out of necessity.

As the PKO has gained more and more importance, the need for reform has become all the more notable in order to ensure its effectiveness.

Among many elements, the Government of Japan places a major emphasis on assistance for gender issues as well as capacity building of UN missions' personnel.

Japan has actively supported various efforts in this field, such as to facilitate the participation of female peacekeepers.

In this context, Women's Protection Advisers, or WPAs, are expected to assume a role of crucial importance in protecting women and children, who have too often fallen victim of conflicts.

We thus designed this ongoing program to build WPAs' capacity with respect to prevention of and response to Conflict-Related Sexual Violence as well as to boost their monitoring, analysis and reporting skills.

And we have invited facilitators who have rich experience in UN peace operations.

There is another significant aspect of this course: the strong sense of mission of the participants.

Those from UN missions have also signed up for this course. They are active WPAs as well as human rights and judicial experts tasked with CRSV issues.

They come from five peacekeeping missions, namely from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Central African Republic, Mali, Sudan, and South Sudan, as well as two special political missions, namely from Iraq and Somalia.

To my great pleasure, seven Japanese women who are potential candidates for future WPAs are also taking part in this course.

To the distinguished participants, here is my message to you: I hope all of you will utilize what you have learnt through this course and play an even more proactive role in the field.

Your task is to prevent and ultimately put an end to CRSVs, and there are still many women and children who are waiting for your support.

I wish you all the best in your challenging tasks, and I sincerely hope that we can together realize a safer world with more efficient and effective peacekeeping operations.

Ladies and gentlemen,

In concluding my remark, I would like to reassure you Japan's unwavering commitment to address challenges facing UN Peacekeeping as well as to further promote the Women, Peace and Security agenda in cooperation with the UN and its Member States.

Thank you.