

Remarks by Mr. Norikazu Suzuki,
Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs
at the Dinner Reception of
the 1st Meeting of the G20 Climate Sustainability Working Group
(Tokyo, February 14, 2019)

Excellency, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, Welcome to Japan!

As you may feel, your visit happens to be in our coldest time of the year in Japan, however, winter does not only chill. It can also cheer you up. In my hometown *Yamagata* Prefecture, the winter is a season known for “*Juhyo*”, frost-covered trees shown in the slide next to me, which are so beautiful and I feel so pity that you all have missed them.

Juhyos, however, cannot escape from the impact of climate change. A report by *Yamagata* University estimates that, for the past seventy years, the temperature at the summit of Mt. *Jizo*, where we see many *Juhyos*, has risen by around three degrees Celsius. The report goes on to explain that if climate change continues, in forty year time, we will be unable to appreciate *Juhyos* any more. Such disruptions to our ecosystem from high temperatures and the intensification of natural disasters have, as shown in 2018, caused huge damage that is beyond our expectations.

In order to tackle these challenges of climate change, it is imperative to take approaches in both mitigation and adaptation. Furthermore, by adding the question of climate finance and how to mobilize them, we will be broadening our horizon of discussions on climate business promotion and further on other issues. It is my sincere hope that active discussions will be held on such various topics.

Taking this opportunity, let me also underline the importance of the year 2020, when the full implementation of the Paris Agreement will commence; 2020 is also the year in which Japan will host the Olympic and Paralympic Games in Tokyo. As we gather here for the meeting and receptions in areas of *Ariyake*, *Odaiba* and *Harumi*, in these places, a number of Olympic-related facilities as well as Olympic villages for the Olympic and Paralympics Games will be established. As Prime Minister Abe announced in his speech in Davos last month, Japan has committed to develop the “Hydrogen society.” Guests arriving from all over the world for the Olympic and Paralympics Games will have the opportunity to experience the “Hydrogen Society” of the future by riding on fuel cell buses. Hydrogen for buses will be made from renewable energy in *Fukushima*. This is a powerful advent to the next generation of clean energies. There are so much in this meeting at *Ariyake*, *Odaiba* and *Harumi* area.

Last but not least, I would like to conclude my remarks with the hope that this Climate Sustainability Working Group, held at these places that I have mentioned, will be convened to hold positive discussions that will help bottom up efforts by each country and to bring about good outcomes.