

Foreign Ministers' Special Video Conference
of the "Central Asia plus Japan" Dialogue
Chairperson's Statement

1. On August 11, 2020, the Foreign Ministers' Special Video Conference of the "Central Asia plus Japan" Dialogue was held, attended by H.E. Mr. MOTEGI Toshimitsu, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan (Chairperson); H.E. Mr. Mukhtar Tileuberdi, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan; H.E. Mr. Chingiz Aidarbekov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic; H.E. Mr. Sirojiddin Muhridin, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan; H.E. Mr. Rashid Meredov, Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan; and H.E. Mr. Abdulaziz Kamilov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan.
2. The Ministers held a lively discussion on: (1) regional cooperation in Central Asia and cooperation between Central Asian countries and Japan amid the worldwide spread of COVID-19; and (2) Way forward for cooperation towards the upcoming 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations with Japan in 2022, particularly the direction of the discussions towards the 8th Foreign Ministers' Meeting.
3. The Ministers noted that, even with the difficulties in conducting human exchanges due to the global COVID-19 pandemic, it is essential to maintain the momentum for dialogue and cooperation that was further strengthened at the 7th Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Tajikistan in May 2019.
4. The Chairperson stated that Japan's basic policy towards Central Asia remains steadfast; solidarity among Central Asian countries becomes ever more critical for the "open, stable and self-sustained" development of Central Asia, and Japan continues to make its contribution as a "catalyst." Furthermore, the Chairperson stressed the unchanging importance of a free and open international order. The Ministers of the Central Asian countries expressed their assent to these views of the Chairperson. The Ministers confirmed progress in regional cooperation and sharing of insight on COVID-19 response among Central Asian countries and shared the view that further solidarity has gained more importance for overcoming common crises.
5. The Ministers of the Central Asian countries expressed their appreciation for Japan's cooperation to support their countries' efforts, namely: (a) provisions of grant aid for health and medical equipment totaling approximately 2 billion yen; (b) provisions of technical assistance as well as health and medical supplies through international organizations; (c) extension of grant aid for the provisions of Avigan tablets to countries, which requested the medicine; and (d) active engagement in sharing information, lessons learned, and experiences on addressing infectious diseases, including exchanges of opinions by teleconference among medical experts.
6. Looking ahead to the upcoming 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Central Asian countries in 2022, the Ministers expressed their hope that the 8th Foreign Ministers' Meeting, which will take place in Japan ahead of this important milestone, would be an opportunity for the five Central Asian countries to demonstrate their strengthened solidarity and for Japan to support this effort in the new post-COVID-19 situation.
7. The Ministers exchanged opinions regarding the direction of the discussions at the 8th Foreign Ministers' Meeting, and shared the view to continue coordination through Senior Officials Meetings (SOM).