

Statement by Mr. UTO Takashi
State Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan

At the General Debate of the 2021 UN High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable
Development, under the auspices of ECOSOC

Your Excellency Mr. António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations,
Your Excellency Mr. Munir Akram, President of ECOSOC,
Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

The COVID-19 pandemic has reminded us of the importance of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and multilateralism. The interlinking impacts of the pandemic showed us the necessity to solve a wide range of global issues through a holistic, SDGs-based approach, which takes into consideration all economic, social and environmental aspects. It is clear now that in our interdependent world no one is safe until everyone is safe. We need to work not only for our own national security but for human security as a whole, upholding “leaving no one behind” as a guiding principle.

As stated in the recently released UN SDG Report 2021, "the current crisis is threatening decades of development gains, further delaying the urgent transition to greener, more inclusive economies, and throwing progress on the SDGs even further off track." In order to achieve the SDGs by 2030, we need to further accelerate our efforts by fostering collaboration among multi-stakeholders.

In this regard, Japan strongly believes the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) provides us with great opportunities to discuss what the international community should do through the rest of the "Decade of Action". Japan presented its second Voluntary National Review (VNR) at the High-level Segment of the HLPF on 15 July. Not only did the VNR identify progress and challenges, it also created opportunities for relevant ministries, local governments, the private sector, civil society, youth, and other stakeholders to discuss amongst each other how to make

further progress to achieve the SDGs. Based on the assessments described in the VNR and the good examples we heard from other Member States, Japan will take further actions in cooperation with the international community.

Among the various challenges the world is facing, Japan will direct its efforts with particular emphasis on the following two points:

First, with a view to achieving Universal Health Coverage (UHC), Japan has given the highest priority to extending our support in the health and medical fields through ensuring equitable access to vaccines and other tools, promoting “Last One Mile Support” including cold chain development, and strengthening health systems.

Second, we will promote the realization of a green society and digital transformation, and address climate change. With the aim of achieving carbon neutrality by 2050, Japan will lead the international community’s efforts toward decarbonization. As a part of such effort, Japan will provide assistance amounting to 6.5 trillion yen, or approximately 60 billion US dollars, to developing countries over the next five years, comprising both public and private funding, to support climate change measures.

The key to these efforts is innovation. Making full use of Japan’s world-class technology and knowhow, we will lead the world in the drive to achieve the SDGs.

We hope this HLPF will lead to further deepening our cooperation within the international community and the acceleration of relevant efforts geared to 2030.

Thank you.