

Rt. Honorable President Ms. Bidya Devi Bhandari,  
Rt. Honorable Prime Minister Mr. Sher Bahadur Deuba,  
Honorable Foreign Minister, Dr. Narayan Khadka,  
Honorable Finance Minister, Mr. Janardan Sharma,  
Honorable Home Minister, Mr. Bal Krishna Khand,  
National Reconstruction Authority, CEO, Mr. Sushil Gyewali,  
Distinguished guests,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Japan highly values the initiative of Prime Minister Deuba and the Government of Nepal, including the National Reconstruction Authority, for hosting this International Conference on Nepal's Reconstruction 2021.

6 years and 7 months have passed since a strong earthquake struck Nepal on April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2015. I once again offer my heartfelt condolences to the families of those who lost their precious lives in the earthquake, and extend my sympathies to all who were affected. I believe that this conference will provide a unique opportunity for Nepal to share, both domestically and internationally, its experiences and lessons-learned as it has recovered from the devastation of the earthquake.

Based on our long-term cordial relationship with Nepal, Japan has proactively contributed to the reconstruction of Nepal. Japan dispatched the Japan Disaster Relief Team immediately after the earthquake, and expressed its intention to provide approximately 260 million US dollars of assistance at the International Conference on Nepal's Reconstruction in 2015.

Through our assistance, approximately 210 schools and 85,000 houses as well as bridges, hospitals, and drinking water transmission systems have been reconstructed. Japan has also contributed to Nepal's disaster preparedness by providing technical assistance in the field of disaster risk reduction and

capacity assessment. These projects are being carried out based on the principle of “Build Back Better” adopted at the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction held in Sendai, Japan. The essence of “Build Back Better” is the importance of making recovery so that society emerges from disaster stronger than before.

Japan and Nepal are both prone to natural disasters. Japan knows what it takes to recover and the hardships that accompany the process of reconstruction. We are honored to have worked together with Nepal based on this first-hand experience.

I would like to pay my respects to Honorable Prime Minister Deuba, who has been taking a leadership role towards reconstruction, and to all those involved throughout the process. Japan would like to continue working closely with Nepal in order to make our friendship even stronger in various fields.

Dhanyavad!