

High-level thematic debate entitled  
“Galvanising Momentum for Universal Vaccination”  
Statement by H.E. HAYASHI Yoshimasa,  
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Mr President of the General Assembly,

It has been almost two years since COVID-19 was declared a pandemic by the WHO. The acceleration of vaccination campaigns throughout the world is an urgent priority for the international community. I thank the President of the General Assembly for taking the initiative to organize this very timely meeting.

Convinced that "No one is safe until everyone in the world is safe," Japan has been promoting international cooperation to overcome COVID-19, with the aim of achieving universal health coverage (UHC) based on the principle of human security.

The emergence and spread of variant strains of the Coronavirus, including the Omicron variant, reminded us of the importance of accelerating vaccination throughout the world, including developing countries. Japan supports the global goal of vaccinating 70% of the populations of all countries by mid-2022. We will continue to provide comprehensive support for each phase, from vaccine manufacturing and development to procurement and supply and to delivery and administration.

To ensure equitable access to vaccines, Japan has provided 1 billion USD in financial contributions to the COVAX Facility and has donated more than 40 million doses of vaccine to countries and regions around the world. Japan will continue to support the supply of vaccines in cooperation with COVAX and other partners.

Besides the supply of vaccines, in order to increase the vaccination rate worldwide, it is necessary to strengthen vaccination systems, including through delivery support, as well as to address challenges such as vaccine hesitancy. For nearly a year, Japan has been steadily providing "Last One Mile Support" in about 60 countries, including the development of cold chain systems to ensure vaccine administration. In order to deliver vaccines to each individual who is waiting to be vaccinated, it is necessary to provide tailored support that meets local needs while utilizing new technologies. For example, in Ghana, the world's first "refrigerated vehicle for vaccine transportation" developed by a Japanese company and qualified by the WHO is now in use. We will continue to expand our support to regions where vaccination needs to be accelerated, including Africa.

Alongside vaccinations, Japan has managed to control the large-scale spread of infectious diseases through the implementation of basic hygiene and infectious disease control measures such as hand-washing and mask-wearing, as well as ensuring that every person has access to essential healthcare services based on Universal Health Coverage.

In 2023, Japan will host the G7 Summit, and the High-Level Meeting on UHC will be held here at the UN General Assembly. Sharing the lessons learned from our own efforts, Japan intends to continue to play a leading role towards achieving UHC globally in close coordination with the UN and other relevant international organizations, including by contributing to the formulation of a post-COVID-19 global health architecture.

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