

Joint Japan/United States COVID-19 Global Action Plan Foreign  
Ministerial Meeting  
Statement by Foreign Minister Hayashi Yoshimasa

Dear colleagues, Good morning, good afternoon, good evening.  
Thank you for participating in the Global Action Plan Ministerial meeting. I commend Tony's dedication and the U.S. leadership toward ending COVID-19. It is a great pleasure for me to co-host this gathering with Tony.

COVID-19 is far from over. The WHO weekly update published last week makes it clear that the number of cases has globally, increased for the fifth consecutive week. We need to remain steadfast in maintaining and accelerating our countermeasures, and act globally with absolute determination to overcome this pandemic.

Japan has contributed approximately 5 billion USD in global response to COVID-19 to date. In addition, as one of the lead countries for the Global Action Plan /Line of Effort (LOE) 1 “Get Shots in Arms”, Japan has provided comprehensive vaccine-related support and promoted cooperation among stakeholders on the ground. We have also been actively contributing to the discussions in LOE 6 “Strengthen Global Health Security Architecture” to better prevent, prepare for, and respond to future pandemics.

In addition to financial contributions of up to 1.5 billion USD to COVAX and dose donations, Japan has been providing tailor-made assistance to meet the needs of the target countries, from transportation to vaccination through our ongoing “Last One Mile” support. For example, the provision of ultra-low temperature freezers and refrigerated vaccine transport vehicles has enabled the diversification of vaccine portfolios that can be handled on the ground, while stabilizing the supply system. We are also working to reduce vaccine hesitancy. The Global Action Plan has facilitated information sharing and coordination on the ground in the implementation of such assistances.

We have to address the fragility in governance and financing related to global health. We need to strengthen the foundations for better prevention, preparedness, and response (PPR) to future health crises, learning the lessons from the current pandemic. We must work to combine the outcome of the ongoing various discussions on strengthening global health architecture. A strong global health architecture should ensure

representativeness, legitimacy, and effectiveness.

Japan welcomes the recent approval by the World Bank of the establishment of the Financial Intermediary Fund for Pandemic Prevention, Preparedness and Response (FIF). Japan has decided to allocate 10 million USD as an initial contribution toward the operational launch of FIF in September. Additional contributions will be considered in the future, once it is determined that the FIF has the appropriate governance structure.

Japan has been fully supporting the ASEAN Center for Public Health Emergencies and Emerging Diseases (ACPHEED) towards its full-scale operation, both financially and through technical assistance, as well as preparation for dispatching Japanese experts. I hope that the Center will become a regional resource hub to strengthen ASEAN's capabilities of preparation, detection, and response to public health emergencies and emerging diseases.

Moreover, Japan has been working to strengthen cooperative relations by dispatching JICA staff to the Africa CDC. The 8th Tokyo International Conference on African Development to be held in Tunisia on August 27 and 28 will be an excellent opportunity to strengthen international partnerships for PPR in Africa.

As the Presidency of the G7 next year, Japan will actively contribute to strengthen global health architecture, with a view to achieving universal health coverage (UHC). Such international efforts include negotiations to make targeted amendments to the International Health Regulations (2005) and negotiations to develop a new international instrument for pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response at WHO.

I hope that through our discussions today we can reaffirm our commitment to overcome this pandemic and to strengthen our preparedness and response to future pandemics.

(End)