

A Video Message from Foreign Minister HAYASHI Yoshimasa  
for the Second Summit for Democracy Indo-Pacific Regional Meeting  
(30<sup>th</sup> March, 2023)

Distinguished participants,

First, I would like to congratulate the Government of the Republic of Korea for hosting Indo-Pacific Regional Meeting of the Second Summit for Democracy under the leadership of Foreign Minister Park.

It is extremely important to discuss anti-corruption at today's meeting on "Democracy". The corruption undermines democratic institutions and values, and causes distortions to the rule of law and economic and social development. It not only results in a loss of trust in government and damage to corporate reputations and credibility, but leads to spread of organized crime and terrorism, putting sustainable development at risk.

Japan has contributed to anti-corruption efforts as a responsible member of the international community. As a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council and the G7 President for this year, Japan has been working to maintain and strengthen the free and open international order based on the rule of law.

In January, I hosted an Open Debate of the UN Security Council under the theme "Rule of Law among Nations". During the session, we also discussed the importance of reducing corruption and creating a level playing field.

Also, in 2021, Japan hosted the 14th UN Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and worked on the adopting of the Kyoto Declaration. The Declaration affirmed the commitment to the strengthening of the rule of law, including ending impunity for corruption, technical assistance and information exchange.

In our effort to address corruption and achieve the rule of law, Japan attaches importance to "rule-making through dialogue" and a "human-centered" approach.

In that spirit, we provide assistance tailored to the actual conditions in each country, with a focus on the Indo-Pacific.

UNAFEI, the UN Asia and Far East Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders in Tokyo has provided training for crime prevention and criminal justice practitioners and supported building of international expert network.

For instance, in order to support efforts to establish the rule of law and good governance in Southeast Asian countries and to promote mutual understanding and cooperation among the countries, the Regional Seminar on Good Governance for Southeast Asian Countries has been held annually since 2007.

Democracy is reinforced through continuous and tireless efforts, including the fight against corruption. Japan stands with "people" who pursue such endeavors. To this end, Japan will further promote our approach to the areas where we have expertise, and continue to contribute to the realization of a corruption-free, transparent, and fair economy and society.

Thank you very much.