



Statement by State Minister for Foreign Affairs

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at the General Assembly Debate on Use of Veto

19 July 2023

Mr. President,

Japan expresses its deep regret that Russia chose to cast a veto on 11 July, blocking the reauthorization of the cross-border humanitarian aid mechanism in Syria. Russia's veto is a clear reflection of its indifference to the suffering of Syrian people. I dare to say that it goes against the solemn duty of a permanent member of the Council.

I listened attentively to the explanation of Russia. I am not convinced why the veto was a responsible behavior. I am not convinced why it can be justified to put lives of over 4 million people, including 3 million women and children under extremely precarious situation, especially in the aftermath of the severe earthquakes. Abuse of the veto damages the United Nations and multilateralism.

The Secretary-General's report is clear. The cross-border mechanism under the Security Council resolutions is the only way to effectively deliver lifesaving humanitarian assistance to the people of northwestern Syria. And, most of the Security Council

members supported the draft resolution. It is unfortunate that Russia, once again, chose to create hardships for the local people.

Mr. President,

We are aware of the Syrian government's recent decision to allow humanitarian aid operation under certain conditions.

However, this cannot be as reliable and transparent as the established mechanism. We need a Security Council resolution for the people of Syria.

Japan, as a responsible member of the Security Council, will continue to work constructively with other partners to this end. The needs of the Syrian people should be our top priority.

I thank you, Mr. President.

(258 words)