

Address by HAYASHI Yoshimasa, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan

1 Introduction

Namaskar, good morning.

Thank you, Ms. Indrani Bagchi, CEO of the Ananta Centre, for your kind introduction. Minister Jaishankar, let me also thank you for your gracious hospitality.

It is a great honor and privilege to be given the opportunity today to address the India-Japan Forum, which holds great significance for our bilateral relations.

2023 is a crucial year in which both our nations hold presidencies of the G7 and G20 respectively. Prime Minister Kishida and Prime Minister Modi agreed that they would work closely together during Prime Minister Kishida's visit here in March. Soon after that, we welcomed Prime Minister Modi at the G7 Hiroshima Summit in May.

Since taking office as Japan's Foreign Minister, I myself have enjoyed working closely and personally with Minister Jaishankar. We have either held or attended six meetings together in person around the world in Tokyo, New Delhi, New York and Melbourne so far. This does not include the numerous times we have bumped into each other at the fringes of international conferences. While I highly admire Minister Jaishankar as a grand strategist, I enjoy my personal interactions with him as he is generous enough to laugh at my endless Beatles jokes each and every single time. Minister Jaishankar, I would like to ask that you will go easy on me for now in this room and save your tough comments and questions for our private discussions.

Today, I would like to highlight two key-points. One is how to pass on the outcomes of the G7 Hiroshima Summit to the G20 New Delhi Summit. Second is how to develop Japan-India relations further, bearing in mind Japan's new plan for a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific," or FOIP, which Prime Minister Kishida announced here in Delhi back in March.

2 From the G7 Hiroshima Summit to the G20 New Delhi Summit

Allow me to move on to my first point. The G7 Hiroshima Summit was a historic meeting, where we addressed various difficult challenges the world is facing at this turning point in history.

Let me bring up the significance of engagement with partners beyond the G7. Bearing in mind that developing and emerging countries are raising their profiles in the global arena, Japan, as the G7 Presidency, emphasized the strengthening of engagement with the so-called "Global South" at the G7 Hiroshima Summit this year. This is guided by our conviction that, unless we keenly listen to the voices of the "Global South" and show our commitment to cooperation on urgent issues facing these countries, our appeal for upholding the free and open international order based on the rule of law may sound like a mere slogan. Prime Minister Modi also emphasized the importance of giving a chance to the "Global South" to raise their voices at the G20 Foreign Ministers' Meeting in March.

At the G7 Hiroshima Summit, the G7 held discussions with the eight invited countries including India, and there were various tangible outcomes. In particular, the leaders of the G7 and the invited countries confirmed to strengthen cooperation on global challenges including food, development, health, energy and climate change, and the environment. These global challenges cannot be overcome by the G7 alone. They also reaffirmed their strong commitment to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Regarding food security, which has been deteriorating due to Russia's aggression against Ukraine, the G7 and the invited countries together issued the "Hiroshima Action Statement for Resilient Global Food Security".

In addressing such global challenges, the G20, which brings together the most influential countries of the Global South, is particularly important. Coordination with India, the G20 Presidency, is critical as your nation hosted the "Voice of Global South Summit" back in January. At the G7 Hiroshima Summit, Prime Minister Modi called for concrete actions to address imminent global challenges. I would like to underscore that these are in line with the outcomes of the G7 Hiroshima Summit, and Japan supports India's various initiatives. Let me take this opportunity to express our government's appreciation to Prime Minister Modi for the valuable inputs for the success of the Hiroshima Summit.

Ladies and gentlemen.

Let me briefly touch upon a few more examples of Japan's support to India's G20 presidency. Regarding the environment, the concept of LiFE (Lifestyle for Environment) introduced by Prime Minister Modi, which asks everyone to live a life that is in tune with earth, resonates well with our government's policy. Japan is also working on several projects as part of ushering in behavioral change aimed for de-carbonization. This demonstrates our shared recognition that the change in the lifestyles of the people is key to de-carbonization.

Another global challenge that I would like to highlight is food security. We commend India's leadership in advancing efforts that pertain to building resilient and sustainable agriculture and food systems, such as launching the Millet and other ancient grains international research initiative

(MAHARISHI). We made sure that such efforts by India were included in the “Hiroshima Action Statement for Resilient Global Food Security”.

These are just a few examples of our multi-faceted and wide-ranging cooperation, and Japan is very much eager to continue working hand in hand with India towards the success of the G20 New Delhi Summit.

3 Japan-India cooperation towards the future of the Indo-Pacific

Ladies and gentlemen.

Another aspect that Japan emphasized at the G7 Hiroshima Summit is to uphold the free and open international order based on the rule of law. The leaders of the G7, invited countries including India, and Ukraine discussed the peace and stability of the world, and agreed on the point that unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force cannot be tolerated anywhere in the world. They also agreed on the significance of the rule of law and the principles of the United Nations Charter.

At a time when there are many pressing challenges including Russia’s aggression against Ukraine, Japan and India fully share the necessity to lead the world to cooperation, rather than to division and confrontation. The free and open international order based on the rule of law is the key to realizing such a world.

To elaborate on this concept, “free” means each country is free to make decisions based on its own sovereignty. The rule of law is essential for countries to enjoy such freedom. “Open” means respect for principles including inclusiveness, openness, and diversity. It is vital that we refrain from imposing values or excluding certain countries.

This concept is especially crucial for smaller countries. In coordination with India, Japan intends to materialize such concept through realizing a “Free and Open Indo-Pacific” or FOIP.

In March this year, Prime Minister Kishida announced Japan’s new plan for FOIP here in New Delhi. This fact itself is a reflection of the critical importance Japan places on India, as your nation is an indispensable partner in achieving FOIP, a Free and Open Indo-Pacific.

Moreover, the efforts to achieve FOIP expands beyond our collaboration with India, but to the whole South Asian region. This new plan makes clear that South Asia is one of the key regions and concrete efforts have been taking place.

In April, we welcomed Prime Minister Hasina from Bangladesh to Japan, and the two Prime Ministers agreed to promote cooperation for a FOIP. Prime Minister Kishida laid out the plan for the “Industrial Value Chain” concept, which aims to improve the connectivity of the entire Bay of Bengal region, and expressed his desire to create synergies by organically linking cooperation under the “Bay of Bengal Industrial Growth Belt (BIG-B)” initiative with the development of the North Eastern Region of India. Relating to the North Eastern Region of India, which I understand is a priority of Prime Minister Modi himself, Japan has extended support for the development of the region including through the “Japan-India Act East Forum”. Going forward, Japan will continue to contribute to the development of the North Eastern Region of India, by promoting such projects as “the North East Road Network Connectivity Improvement Project” to enhance the connectivity in the region.

I will be visiting Sri Lanka and the Maldives this weekend. There, I intend

to promote concrete cooperation between Japan and these countries as well. I believe that we can together create synergies across the region.

Let us now come back to our bilateral ties with India. Here, allow me to cite Minister Jaishankar's book "The India Way", in which he describes Japan-India relation as "the most natural strategic equation in Asia". I perfectly share his view, and we believe that close coordination with India is key to bringing peace and stability to the Indo-Pacific at large. In that vein, Japan intends to drive forward our cooperation in all areas to expand our "Special Strategic and Global Partnership" with India.

Allow me to elaborate.

The frequent and multi-layered high-level contacts have been the backbone of Japan-India relations. High-level exchanges have acted as the driving force to push forward our security and defense cooperation. We have conducted defense exercises on land, at sea, and in the air, including the first ever joint fighter exercise in January. The Agreement Between the Government of Japan and the Government of the Republic of India Concerning Reciprocal Provision of Supplies and Services Between the Self-Defense Forces of Japan and the Indian Armed Forces (ACSA) is being utilized for these exercises. We see progress on cooperative initiatives in new realms including cyber and space, where discussions at the working level are being carried out. Discussions toward the realization of substantial cooperation in the areas of defense equipment and technology are also underway.

The outlook for our collaboration in the economic field is promising. Prime Minister Modi has placed economic growth as one of his top priority agendas, and has promoted various economic initiatives including Make in India,

Digital India, and Clean India. As a measure to promote investment, Prime Minister Modi has identified 15 key sectors including telecommunications equipment, automobiles, and applied chemical batteries that are eligible for subsidies. All of this have led to the remarkable growth in Japanese investment into crucial technologies such as medical equipment, electronics and household electric appliances.

We have been encouraging Japanese companies to increase investment in India. For example, Prime Minister Kishida set the 5-trillion-yen target of public and private investment and financing from Japan to India in the next five years from 2022. At the same time, we will work together with the Indian government to effectively address the difficulties that Japanese companies face in the Indian market.

Ladies and gentlemen.

Last month, Japan revised its Development Cooperation Charter, which is our basic document on development cooperation. The new Charter will enable Japan to better address development challenges we face including food and energy, climate change, and digital transformation. Under this revised Charter, we will continue to undertake efforts to build Quality Infrastructure in India including the high-speed rail and urban transportation.

Let me briefly elaborate on the high-speed rail project, which is the flagship project between Japan and India. By introducing Japanese bullet train, shinkansen technologies, this project will connect Mumbai to Ahmedabad (アーメダバード) , a distance of approximately 500 kilometers, and is expected to improve the efficiency of transportation as well as promote economic development in areas along the high-speed rail. We truly hope that the completion of this high-speed rail will enable India to achieve further

economic growth.

Ladies and gentlemen.

To expand the breadth and depth of our bilateral relationship, it is crucial that we promote people-to-people exchange. As we are now in the post-COVID 19 era, this is an opportune time to revitalize various exchanges. Our Prime Ministers agreed to further promote exchanges at the Summit meeting held in March. We designated this year 2023 as the “Japan-India tourism exchange year”, and we will bolster tourism. Japan and India will also promote Japanese language education, student exchanges, and the Specified Skilled Worker System. We will cooperate to bring human resources from India to Japan especially in the IT-field.

Last but not least, we will continue to cooperate through international organizations and multilateral frameworks. India is an integral partner for us in terms of the United Nations Security Council reform, where we have been working shoulder to shoulder as G4 members to achieve concrete results. We have also promoted practical cooperation in a wide-range of fields through the Quad.

4 Closing remarks

In closing, I would like to reflect on some of the memorable moments of the G7 Hiroshima Summit. India erected Mahatma Gandhi’s bust as a gift to the city of Hiroshima. Prime Minister Modi and Mayor Matsui of the city of Hiroshima personally attended the unveiling of the bust. This was widely covered by the Japanese media. This gift is indeed a symbol that Japan and India are united in their steps towards peace. The leaders of the world visited the Peace Memorial Museum and deepened their understanding of the reality of the use of nuclear weapons. The leaders left comments in the guest book

that reflected their reaffirmed determination to achieve a world without nuclear weapons. Prime Minister Modi described his visit to the Museum as “an emotional experience” afterwards.

Japan is fully committed to the success of the G20 New Delhi Summit. The theme of India’s G20 Presidency is “Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam” (ヴァスダイヴァ・クトウンバカム) or “One Earth – One Family – One Future”. Prime Minister Modi, in explaining the meaning of this theme, stated that we need to break away from zero-sum thinking, and called for harmony among humankind as well as with planet Earth. The meaning of G20’s theme is in line with the principles of Japan’s FOIP, which strives for fostering cooperation at a time of deepening division and confrontation.

We look forward to continuing to work side by side with India in the spirit of harmony and cooperation for a better future of the region and beyond.

I thank you for your kind attention. Dhanyavaad (ダンニャバード) .

(英語：約 2400 語)