

JAPAN-ETHIOPIA JOINT PRESS ANNOUNCEMENT SCRIPT

Thank you for gathering today.

This is my first visit to Ethiopia and also, as Japanese Foreign Minister, I am delighted to visit Ethiopia for the first time in about four years.

I have just finished my meeting with Deputy Prime Minister DEMEKE Mekonnen Hassen. During the meeting, we had a frank and fruitful exchange of views on the bilateral relation, regional situations and cooperation in the international arena.

At the outset of the meeting, I mentioned Japan's support for the implementation of the Peace Agreement signed between the Ethiopian government and the TPLF, and stated that Japan would give serious consideration to further cooperation towards the implementation of the agreement. Also, I introduced Japan's efforts through "investing in people" and stated that Japan is willing to strengthen bilateral cooperation in the economic field.

Regarding the situation in Ukraine, I shared with Deputy Minister DEMEKE my concerns about the impact of Russia's aggression against Ukraine on food security in Africa. Japan deplores the termination of the Black Sea Grain Initiative by Russia and Japan hopes to work together with Ethiopia towards the resumption of the initiative.

In addition, we exchanged views on the situation in Africa and regional issues in East Asia including North Korea's nuclear and missile issues as well as the abduction's issue. We also discussed various issues in the international community, such as the opaque and unfair development finance and the strengthening of the functions of the United Nations including the Security Council.

After this, I will pay a courtesy call on Prime Minister Abiy. Towards the fulfillment of the potential of both Ethiopia and Africa, I am looking forward to having frank exchange of views on regional situations and cooperation in the international arena as well as the bilateral relation.

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Thank you.