

Video message by H.E. Ms. KAMIKAWA Yoko,
Foreign Minister of Japan
at IOM Council High-level Segment
Geneva, Switzerland (November 28th, 2023)

Distinguished participants,

I am KAMIKAWA Yoko, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan. I am honoured to have the opportunity to deliver a speech today through this video message. First of all, I would like to warmly welcome the appointment of Ms. Pope as the first woman to serve as Director General of IOM.

Last year, the number of forced displacements in the world exceeded 100 million persons for the first time. In recent years, climate change has been recognized as one of the causes behind this increase, and we are seriously concerned about this. Against this background, we believe that IOM's initiative to hold a high-level segment under the theme of 'climate impact on human mobility' is important and timely. I applaud the leadership of Director General Pope in this regard.

Climate change may have caused the flooding in eastern Libya in September. Tens of thousands of people were displaced by the catastrophic flooding. In cooperation with IOM, Japan provided displaced people in Libya with shelter, water and sanitation, and mental

health and psychosocial support.

In addition to such emergency humanitarian assistance, Japan has been leveraging its experience as a disaster-prone country to provide support for disaster prevention, early warning, and strengthening community resilience on a global scale to mitigate climate impacts on human mobility.

I would like to point out the fact that women and children are the most vulnerable during humanitarian crises. Humanitarian assistance must be provided with due consideration for women and children.

The concept of Women, Peace and Security, or WPS, is highly applicable when providing such assistance. The concept of WPS is that we have a better chance to achieve sustained peace when women hold leadership positions and actively participate in conflict resolution, reconstruction and peacebuilding. In addressing the impacts of climate change, Japan will emphasize gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment in keeping with the WPS agenda.

Also, it is especially important to provide displaced children with educational opportunities when the evacuation is expected to be protracted.

At the same time, Japan will continue its efforts to achieve net zero by the year 2050 to address the root causes of climate change.

I understand that IOM has an advantage in providing seamless assistance that is closely in tune with the needs of the people. Japan will continue to work with IOM to provide emergency humanitarian assistance and mid- to long-term development cooperation to mitigate the impacts of climate change on human mobility, especially on vulnerable people, such as women, children, and the elderly.

Thank you.