

**Closing Remarks (Video Message) by Me. TSUJI Kiyoto,  
State Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan  
at the ECOSOC Youth Forum Side Event  
New York, US (April 17th, 2024)**

Honorable panelists, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen.  
I am TSUJI Kiyoto, State Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan.

I feel honored and privileged to be a part of this event to discuss the ways to empower youth who were associated with non-state armed groups in view of enhancing agendas of the “Women, Peace, Security”, namely WPS, and “Youth, Peace Security”, or YPS.

I am also grateful to Accept International for organizing this event.

Every single young person has great potential to build peaceful societies. To turn this potential into reality, youth need to be able to feel confident that they can build peace and be provided with opportunities for empowerment.

However, this is difficult particularly when youth, women and girls face fragile situations and gender-based challenges regarding peace and security.

In this context, Japan’s engagement with youth associated with non-state armed groups is based on the human security approach, which calls for protection and empowerment.

It is important to recognize that sustainable peace cannot be achieved just by the cessation of violence, but through building resilience on the ground and upholding the human dignity of every individual.

This can be realized through an inclusive approach, by ensuring

the full, equal, and meaningful participation of women and youth across political and socio-economic dimensions. It is also critical to safeguard their rights to education, as education enables them to rebuild their lives and reclaim their role in societies.

In this regard, it is commendable that Accept International provides a range of initiatives aimed at empowering youth who were once associated with armed groups. These initiatives include fostering dialogue, providing skills training, and organizing reintegration workshops.

I am certain this event will help raise awareness about the presence and unique potential of youth associated with non-state armed groups and accelerate our support to those people, towards building sustainable peace.

Thank you.