

Remarks by Ms. KAMIKAWA Yoko, Minister for  
Foreign Affairs

- Thank you, Professor Marwala for your excellent remarks.  
Thank you everyone for coming today.
- For the past ten months, I have been traveling the world as the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and through my travels, I have come to realize the world is at a historical inflection point.
- The pace of change is accelerating, and its effects spread wider and deeper.  
As the world continues to face complex challenges, we need to seek new ideas, innovations and a long term perspective.
- It is you, the youth, who have such perspectives.  
The questions you pose and the energy you exert, before fully integrated in the society or right after being so, drive positive social changes.
- I strongly believe that Japan's foreign policy would be better informed by involving youths the reservoirs of free thinking I have just mentioned.

- I am leading the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to reflect their voices, desires and worries in all areas of our policies.
- I had the chance to talk to the youths of Ukraine who had fled to Poland, and to junior high school students of Gaza.
- Both, despite their difficult circumstances, emphasized their hope for the future and what they aspire to be.  
I was deeply moved by their testimonies.
- You, the younger generation are taking the solutions of global issues as your own challenge. With this global mindset, you lead a new way of life which aims to be environmentally friendly and sustainable.
- That is why we need to ensure an environment where the youth and future generations can fully realize their potential.  
I believe that we can better perform our duties by mainstreaming youths' perspectives in all areas of our foreign policy.

- Mutual learning is another key.  
I myself am looking forward to today's dialogue.  
I also hope that this will be a learning opportunity for all of you, too. Let's inspire each other.
- We have invited the youth from various countries and backgrounds.  
I'm sure that each of you will have some common views, as well as some differing views.
- If we are serious about making the world a better place, we should understand each other.  
This will lead to true international cooperation.
- Last week, I visited Bosnia and Herzegovina.  
It is where atrocities no one had imagined would recur in a post-Cold War Europe happened.
- I witnessed the reality where the past memories are taken differently by ethnic groups, and even school textbooks are divided.
- I believe education to foster mutual understanding among you, the youth, is indispensable to foster the future.

- Let me take another example of the SDGs.  
The youth are at the core of the discussions on the 2030 Agenda as well as on society beyond 2030.  
The SDGs are off-track on many fronts.
- Therefore, we need to be accelerating our efforts.  
The 17 goals of the SDGs are inter-related and require concerted efforts by various stakeholders.  
The essence of the SDGs is what kind of world we want and how we want to live.
- Women, Peace and Security (WPS), which I am actively promoting, is another initiative to build a diverse society and achieve sustainable peace through women's participation in leading roles in peacebuilding and disaster reconstruction processes.
- This September, the Summit of the Future will be held in New York.  
The SDGs, WPS and the world's future will be some of the important topics of the Summit.
- Today, in relation to the Summit of the Future, I would like to hear from you what "well-being" or "happiness" means to you.

- How can we enhance each other's well-being?  
How can we pass those important elements of well-being to the future generations?
  
- I also would like to learn how you would like to participate in these global efforts.  
What do you consider "meaningful participation" in decision making to be?  
What should be done both at the national and global level?
  
- Those are important questions for all of us and for the Summit of the Future.  
I also hope that by posing these questions, you will think about your own future and what kind of vocation you want to pursue.  
I will be thrilled if today's mutual learning opportunity gives you a hint for your own future.
  
- I look forward to having an inspiring discussion with you all.  
Thank you.