

Message by H.E. Mr. MOTEGI Toshimitsu,
Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan
at the International Conference
“Pathways to Peace: 2nd International Conference on Returning
Ukrainian Children, Detained Civilians, and Prisoners of War”
September 28-29, 2026
Toronto, Canada

The Honourable Anita Anand, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Canada,
Your Excellency Mr. Sybiha, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine,
Your Excellency Mr. Eide, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of
Norway,
Distinguished guests,

I would like to express my respect to the Governments of Canada, Ukraine and Norway for leading efforts to secure the return of forcibly transferred Ukrainian children and detained civilians by Russia, and prisoners of war, as well as for organizing today’s conference.

Russia’s aggression against Ukraine is an outrageous act that shakes the very foundations of the international order, and such attempts to unilaterally change the status quo by force must not be tolerated. It is crucial to bring about a just and lasting peace in Ukraine as soon as possible. Japan will continue working in cooperation with relevant countries to ensure that Ukraine’s future is respected in accordance with the will of the Ukrainian people.

The return of all Ukrainians, including children who have been taken by Russia, is a critical issue. Japan has actively participated in coordinated efforts by the international community and, as a co-sponsor, supported the United Nations General Assembly resolution on the return of Ukrainian children adopted in December last year. Furthermore, Japan is a member of the “International Coalition for the Return of Ukrainian Children,” led by Canada and Ukraine.

In addition, for the purpose of encouraging cooperation among stakeholders addressing the challenges that Ukrainian children are facing, Japan has decided to provide support to the “Council of Europe Consultation Group on the Children of Ukraine”.

Japan’s position of standing with Ukraine remains unwavering. We will continue diplomatic efforts toward the return of all Ukrainian citizens.