

Opening Remarks by Mr. Masakazu Hamachi,
Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan
On the Occasion of the 13th ODA Evaluation Workshop

(Tentative translation)

Distinguished participants,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Welcome to the ODA Evaluation Workshop.

I am Masakazu Hamachi, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan. It gives me great pleasure that the 13th ODA Evaluation Workshop is being held here in Tokyo. I would like to express my appreciation for your participation.

Since ODA is an important tool for securing peace, stability and prosperity of the international community, Japan is utilizing ODA in a proactive and strategic manner in wide-ranging areas, to solve the diverse, complex and widespread development challenges that the world is facing today. On the other hand, as ODA is financed by tax revenues from the public, it is essential to gain the understanding and support of the people both in the donor country and in the partner country in order to ensure sustainable implementation of development cooperation. In this regard, ODA evaluation is inextricably linked to the implementation of ODA, and it should develop together with the advancement of ODA.

Japan has convened 12 ODA Evaluation Workshops since 2001. Through the mutual learning process of the participants, this Workshop has contributed to the promotion, in the Asian and Pacific countries, of people's understanding towards ODA evaluation and of related capacity development. In this region, the Asia Pacific Evaluation Association (APEA) was established in 2012, which is the first evaluation network in the region. I am delighted to be able to hold the Workshop here today with the participants from APEA and the Asian and Pacific countries.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

2015 has been an essential milestone year for ODA evaluation in the field of development cooperation for the international community and Japan.

First, in September this year, as you know, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations. This Agenda refers to the importance of building a new global partnership in which all stakeholders play their respective roles, and it

indicates common challenges to be addressed by the international community in order to eliminate poverty from the earth and to transform the world into a sustainable planet by 2030. The Agenda also states that, upon implementation, it is essential to build a follow-up and review framework that is rigorous and based on evidence, informed by country-led evaluations and data. At the same time, the Agenda points out the need for enhancing capacity development, which includes the strengthening of evaluation projects implemented in partner countries.

Also, in February this year, the Government of Japan revised the ODA Charter, which had formed the foundation of Japan's ODA policy, and the new Development Cooperation Charter was approved by a cabinet decision. The new Charter clearly states the importance of evaluation, not only for improving effectiveness and efficiency but also for accountability to the public, and it states that the results of evaluation are to be feedback to the decision-making and program/project implementation processes. Japan must therefore strengthen our evaluation efforts.

Furthermore, 2015 is the International Year of Evaluation, best known as EvalYear. As the attention of the international community on development policies, ODA project evaluation and monitoring is increasing, there have been many events throughout this year, and there is increasingly strong expectation that evaluation will be a useful tool for the formulation and implementation of development policies by partner countries themselves. Japan wishes to contribute to the advancement of evaluation by working in tandem with other movements in the international community including EvalNet, an organization of OECD-DAC. It is our hope that this Workshop will also contribute to that end, as a wrap-up event of EvalYear.

Taking such recent developments into consideration, anticipated topics of discussion at this year's Workshop include recent experiences in ODA evaluation, evaluation efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030, and evaluation of environmental and climate change projects, which is a hot topic for the Asian and Pacific countries.

I sincerely hope that there will be very active discussion among the participants at this Workshop, and that this Workshop will contribute to evaluation efforts in the Asian and Pacific countries, as well as to the strengthening of the evaluation network. Once again, I would like to thank everyone for your participation, and end my remarks by wishing you all a great two days at this Workshop.

Thank you for your attention.